

HOW RUSSIA MAKES WAR

Soviet Military Doctrine

Raymond L. Garthoff

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How Russia Makes War

SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE

Raymond L. Garthoff

WITH A PREFACE BY
H. A. DEWEERD

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Preface

DESPITE unimpressive performances in earlier struggles, the Red Army emerged from World War II the largest and in some respects the most powerful ground force in the world. The politico-military influence exerted by this army not only assured the communist domination of the Axis satellite states, but, even in the face of a temporary American monopoly of atomic weapons, gravely threatened the security of western Europe. It remains the principal menace to world peace. Yet so little is known about this military force that one author writing on the Red Army appropriately entitled his book

The Unknown Army. The number of really useful books on the Red Army appearing in the English language can be listed on the fingers of one hand. Until Mr. Garthoff supplied the deficiency, there was not a single one available on Soviet military doctrine.

Military doctrine may be said to consist in the guiding policies, basic assumptions, fundamental principles, and methods of achieving a nation's political objectives by military means. Strategy and tactics, weapons systems, training and discipline all contribute—under the guiding influence of doctrine—to the attainment of the objectives sought. If the doctrine is sound and well calculated to serve the national interest in a given situation, the attainment of objectives will be accomplished in economical fashion. If not, false doctrine may lead to national disaster. The usefulness of Mr. Garthoff's soundly documented pioneer study to anyone trying to understand the requirements of western European and American security can hardly be overestimated.

In preideological days the study of military doctrine was a simpler matter than it is today. Since Soviet military doctrine is bound up with revolutionary and party origins, with the day-to-day matters of political control of the USSR and its satellites, and with the inevitable problem of world conquest, it is, as the reader of this volume will soon discover, a complicated matter requiring frequent restatement in order to win full acceptance even among its own authors. Once accepted, however, doctrine takes on a special political "sacredness" which makes it hard to alter in any way.

It is precisely in the claim that its military doctrine is something unique and always "correct" that the Soviet Union lays itself open to the most dangerous errors in the future. It is also in this field that history presents the most embarrassing refutations of its theories. As in the case of "Fiihrer worship" with the Nazis, the glorification of Stalin—or whoever may be the ruler of the Soviet Union in the future—is certain to present grave handicaps to the efficient functioning of the Red Army. This will be true simply because the military doctrine he has approved must always be "right." The corrective force of experience has been and will be slow to make itself felt in the military operations conducted by the Soviet Union, even in the face of threatening disaster.

This accounts in part for the narrow margin by which the Soviet Union escaped military defeat in the summer of 1941. Soviet military doctrine had not changed substantially in the period from 1939 to 1941; yet Stalin, in an

expansive mood at Teheran, admitted that the Red Army was poorly organized and inefficient during the Finnish war (1939–1940) and had to be “reorganized.” Despite this he said that the Red Army was unable to meet the *Wehrmacht* on equal terms in the summer of 1941. It had to be “reorganized” again in the midst of the German war before it became what Stalin called a “genuinely good army.” The Russian people and the troops of the Red Army were heroic; this Stalin admitted. Soviet military doctrine was “correct”—it had to be. What, then, can explain the defeats and losses which almost destroyed the Soviet State in the summer of 1941? The answer may well be found in the frantic efforts made in the Soviet Union to glorify Stalin as a military leader and thus conceal his primary responsibility for the failures and losses of that year.

Military forces in action look and perform differently from the way they do in theory or on the parade ground. Thus, when Stendhal’s youthful hero in *la Chartreuse de Parme* rushed toward Waterloo to see Napoleon’s famous army, he found only a rabble of thieves and cutthroats who promptly stole his horse. So it was with the Red Army in World War II. Despite all the precautions which the Soviets took to keep Allied observers away from the fighting front, a considerable number of Allied officers and large numbers of Germans saw the Red Army in action. What they saw did violence to many of the doctrines enshrined in Soviet military literature. As Lord Kitchener once said, “One makes war as one must—not as one would like to.” The task of the student of military affairs is to determine how much of Soviet military doctrine is *real* and how much is political window dressing, or *klyukva*, a Russian word sometimes used to describe a certain type of amusingly inaccurate information.

Though change is slow, the rate at which it occurs in Soviet military doctrine is a matter of vital importance to all countries outside the iron curtain. If the Soviets maintain for a considerable period of time the doctrines described in this volume, the menace which the Red Army poses to the security of western Europe and the United States will remain at a certain degree of magnitude. If these doctrines should undergo radical change in the next decade, the danger might be of an entirely different character.

Up to the present, Soviet doctrine has tended to minimize the importance of strategic air operations. Does this attitude arise from poverty of equipment and lack of experience or from a fixed belief? History records one rather frightening example of an empire’s imitating and then perfecting the war

methods of another in order to destroy the country providing the model. Rome lost the command of the seas to Carthaginian galleys early in the Punic wars. By first copying these galleys and then perfecting boarding tactics, the Romans won back the command of the seas and prepared the way for the eventual destruction of Carthage. Fortunately for us the “new” Soviet history explains the downfall of Carthage in strictly Marxist terms!

Mr. Garthoff’s achievement in sifting this considerable body of information concerning Soviet military doctrine from the numerous sources he consulted is a very real one. It proves once again that the great libraries of a nation are among the first sources of really useful military intelligence. The author can enjoy the satisfaction which comes from having thrown a considerable amount of light on one dark area of what Mr. Churchill, attempting to describe the Russian problem, once called “an enigma wrapped in mystery.”

H. A. DEWEERD
*Chairman, Department of History
University of Missouri*

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In the preparation of this study I have been fortunate in having the encouragement and criticisms of my colleagues on the staff of The RAND Corporation. I am particularly indebted to Nathan Leites, mentor in analyzing Bolshevism, and to Hans Speier and Bernard Brodie for their valuable suggestions on this study. For extensive editorial assistance I am very grateful to John Hogan.

To compensate for the fact that I am not a professional military man, a number of officers have carefully read the draft manuscript of this study and generously given advice on the basis of their professional knowledge. Other

persons in government service have contributed valuable advice and assistance in the collection of materials.

This study is largely a revised and extended version of a dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Yale University, with permission of THE RAND Corporation.

Responsibility for the study and its interpretations and conclusions must remain mine.

RAYMOND L. GARTHOFF

WASHINGTON, D.C.

To

My Wife and Inspiration

VERA ALEXANDROVNA

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INTRODUCTION

The intention of this study has been to construct the pattern of Soviet military doctrine and to offer certain interpretations of its basis. This means largely discovering and clarifying that which is taught, believed, and intended by the Soviets as the basis for their conduct of war and battle. At the same time, an endeavor has been made not merely to determine manifest Soviet doctrine, but also to formulate and to make explicit those tenets which are themselves not recognized by the Soviets as part of their formal doctrine, but which nonetheless actually play a substantial role in it.

No comprehensive study of "Western military doctrine" or of the military doctrines of other states exists to serve as a point of comparison and departure in preparing this study. Accordingly, it has been necessary to avoid the temptations and dangers of considering military ideas common to other armies as being peculiarly "Soviet." The author has been assisted in this by the comments of a number of USA and USAF regular officers and by a careful comparison of Soviet and U.S. Army manuals and regulations. References to these regulations are made where the comparison or contrast will assist the reader in perceiving distinctive Soviet ideas or nuances. Many of the points set forth apply to the military science of other nations; no attempt has been made to locate principles of exclusive relevance to Soviet doctrine. Yet the picture of Soviet military doctrine which emerges from this study includes significant differences in stress from what might have been expected in terms of knowledge of Western military science, or Marxism, or Russian military history. It is the total combination of principles (which in themselves may each be but variations of ideas held by other military thinkers or doctrines current or historical) which is distinctive. Similarly, Marxism-Leninism, Imperial Russian doctrine, foreign influences, and the geographic-political basis of the power situation of the USSR all have contributed to the formation of Soviet military doctrine. The first chapter of this study deals with the fundamental problem of the relation of Soviet

military and political doctrines and strategies. From this perspective, the present study is significant not only for its analysis of Soviet military doctrine per se, but also for the light it may shed upon Soviet modes of thought and upon the over-all behavior pattern of the Soviet elite.*

* The pioneer analysis of Soviet political doctrine by Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo*, The Rand Series, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1951, provides a basis for a comparison with the conclusions of this study, a number of peculiarities in doctrine in each either corresponding or being identical.

Primary among the many available Soviet sources which have been used are the *Field Regulations* and manuals of the armed forces, the relevant writings of political and military leaders, and the military press in general, all of which have been studied intensively. The Bibliography includes the more worth while of those works consulted. There is a common misconception that all Soviet writing is “merely propaganda” and hence is not capable of pointing to real effective doctrine. There is a certain foundation for this, in that the Soviet popular press is limited to a number of standard and repetitive themes often quite alien to fact and to practice. But it must be remembered that the military regulations, and the periodical and other military press, provide the bases for the education of Soviet officers and the guide for their conduct of war. A considerable amount of information, even candid admissions of shortcomings, can be found in them. It is not unusual for Soviet generals to contribute articles on tactics to the military journals. In fact, the journal *Military Thought* (which is restricted to field grade and general officers) includes the results of research at the Frunze General Staff College. Suggested innovations or changes in tactical doctrine are occasionally published (always with the express notation “presented by way of discussion”). The Bibliography to this study includes a brief note on all the Soviet military periodical publications.

Soviet statements concerning actual performance of the armed forces are presented not as statements of the record of Soviet military history, but rather as illustrations of points of doctrine. They may or may not be correct. Even when exaggerated, the exaggeration tends to reach toward the ideal and is hence useful as an indication of doctrine. Various non-Soviet, especially German, commentaries on the Soviet armed forces and their doctrine have also been consulted. None of them, however, survey or even summarize Soviet military doctrine, “formal” or actual.* In addition to these sources, the statements of former Soviet officers who have left the Soviet Union and have

contributed their knowledge of Soviet military affairs (through articles published abroad and by personal interviews conducted by this author and his colleagues) have been cautiously used.

* The author has previously outlined some of the outstanding characteristics of Soviet military doctrine, strategy, and tactics. (See R. L. Garthoff, "On Soviet Military Strategy and Capabilities," *World Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 1, October, 1950, pp. 114-129)

The presentation of Soviet military doctrine by current operative principles has been adopted as being a more meaningful and useful approach than a chronological historical development. The author has not attempted to write a study of the war experience of the Red Army, but reference is made to illustrations and evidence from the record of the recent war.

[Part I](#) of this study is concerned with the relation between Soviet military doctrine and Soviet political doctrine and strategy. The fundamental Bolshevik "combat image" of the world and political relations is discussed, and the chief basic assumptions of Bolshevism that provide the framework within which Soviet military thought is cast are evaluated.

Soviet concepts of military thought are also examined. In general, they correspond to those of the West, with two significant exceptions. First, the Soviets distinguish an "operating art," between the traditional categories of strategy and tactics, which is considered to correspond to field military operations by an Army or Front (Army Group). Second, the Soviets do not formulate an explicit enumeration of principles of war (although there is a partially equivalent list of "permanently operating factors"). In fact, there is an implicit set of Soviet principles of war corresponding generally to those of the Western powers but exhibiting interesting peculiarities.

The background influences of Marxism, Imperial Russian doctrine, and foreign military authorities on the development of Soviet military doctrine are also reviewed. The chief conclusions of [Part I](#) are: (1) Marxism-Leninism exerted relatively little direct influence on Soviet military doctrine per se and there is no new "Stalinist military science." The chief direct influences are the attitudes toward morale and initiative and the institution of political commissars. (2) The influence of the Imperial Russian army and doctrine is very considerable. (3) Foreign military influences, notably the ideas of Clausewitz, have contributed to Soviet military doctrine.

[Part II](#) of the study represents a distillation and analysis of the current basic Soviet principles of war. The fifteen chapters of this Part analyze these principles, the sum of which is the essence of Soviet military doctrine. The

salient principles of military action are the offensive, maneuver and initiative, the concentration of force, the economy of force, surprise and deception, momentum of advance and pursuit, annihilation of all opposition, maintenance of strong reserves, and the close cooperation of combined mutually supporting arms.

[Part III](#) of the study is a more detailed examination of the operational, tactical, and organizational field doctrine of the various combat arms of the Soviet armed forces. The missions of land power, airpower, and sea power in Soviet doctrine and the doctrine for implementing these missions are analyzed.

Many of the data date from the Soviet-German war, but sufficient material from recent postwar years is available to warrant assumptions of current applicability, with some exceptions as noted. Moreover, the Soviets themselves stress that the data of the recent war are the basis for the further development of their military doctrine.

Transliterated Russian terms for organizations and key words are included where the inconsistency of Western translation or the novelty of the term to Western thinking requires specific indication of the original.* The appended Glossary includes such terms.

* The Library of Congress system of transliteration has been used, except in the case of proper names or place names well known in a different spelling, and with the exceptions of a *y* instead of the double *ii* at the end of, and *ya* or *yu* instead of *ia* or *iu* at the beginning of, a proper name.

PART I

BASES OF SOVIET MILITARY

DOCTRINE

The military and political strategy and doctrine in the Soviet view are discussed, with detailed consideration of Soviet concepts of military doctrine and a general background survey of the chief influences on its origin and development.

CHAPTER 1

SOVIET STRATEGY, MILITARY DOCTRINE, AND “COLD WAR”

Politics and War

Bolshevism originated as a revolutionary movement with a distinctive image of political relations. In the Bolshevik view of the world, the normal expectation was struggle, a complete struggle to the death between the Bolshevik Party as the vanguard of the oppressed and the capitalist-imperialist oppressors. Originally cast in the Marxian context of class struggle, the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia in the October (1917) Revolution extended the theater of combat to the “world arena.” Class struggle henceforth acquired a geographic-political dimension, and Bolshevism became an ideology in international relations among states rather than merely the code of a small group of revolutionary Russian exiles.

Soviet military (and political) doctrine is based on a military model of political relations derived from the fundamental Bolshevik conflict-image of the world. The direct application of this “combat frame of reference” to political relations, internal and international, countenancing only perpetual struggle to annihilation, was a revolutionary innovation. Soviet political strategy cannot be understood without acute awareness of this underlying basis.

This “military” conception, oriented on the view of “destroy-or be destroyed,” pervades all Soviet politics, which means all Soviet life. The constant demands to improve the statistical “front,” to build up the moral “reserves” of the “socialist camp,” to increase “vigilance” by the “warriors of the pen,” to increase production by the “shock brigades” of the collective

farms and factories—all this military terminology is symptomatic of the thought pattern of militarized politics and the basic combat frame of reference.

Soviet military doctrine shows evidence of certain peculiarities in emphasis probably the result of influences transferred from this Bolshevik political conception, which, of course, preceded the development of military doctrine by one and one-half decades. On some of these points there may be a transfer of nonrational stress, acquired by the Soviet political doctrine as it became sanctified into a secular religion (substituting faith for reason and demanding absolute acceptance). This “religious” compulsion is less strong in military affairs than in perhaps any other walk of life in the USSR. Nonetheless, it affects not only “true believers” in Bolshevism, but pervades all overt thought, indoctrination, and action in the Soviet Union, since disagreement with or modification of Soviet doctrine or policy, as is well known, carries extremely severe sanctions and is hence practically nonexistent. This form of influence may pertain to evaluation of the relative importance of certain types of military behavior (such as a marked stress on flank and rear attacks) and may even affect the military strategy directly; for instance, the selection of “the main blow” of military force may be determined by the Soviet political analysis of “the main link” in the enemy front. For example, the invasion of Finland in 1939 was predicated on an (incorrect) political analysis of internal Finnish political dissension and weakness.

The Soviet world-view accepts completely Clausewitz’ idea that “War is the continuation of politics by other means.” Lenin stressed this many times. Stalin, while repudiating Clausewitz as a military authority,* restated Lenin’s evaluation that Clausewitz had “supported in his works the well known Marxist thesis† of the fact that there exists a direct connection between war and politics, that politics begets war, that war is a continuation of politics by violent means.”¹ Soviet doctrine and policy goes far beyond Clausewitz’ idea to a different and supplementary conception of international politics. While fully endorsing and energetically pursuing a policy which takes cognizance of the direct and intimate connection between peacetime and wartime relations, Soviet policy presumes permanent conflict (although not necessarily armed), even in peace.

NOTE: For numbered footnote references, see pp. 447 ff.

* See Chapter 3, pp. 53-56, for these references and for discussion of Clausewitz' influence on Soviet military doctrine. Marx, Engels, and Lenin all praised him; Stalin says he is now "obsolete."

† Clausewitz wrote before even Marx was a Marxist.

Thus the Soviet military authority Shaposhnikov declared: "If war is a continuation of politics, only by other means, so also peace is a continuation of struggle only by other means."² In this sense, and this is basic to Soviet doctrine and strategy, the distinction between peace and war is obliterated, except for the difference in the degree of armed force used in the perpetual conflict. As Lenin once wrote: "War is the continuation of that same (peacetime) policy with the entry of those changes in the relation of opposed forces which are created by military action."³ Military action is a planned and controlled segment of the fundamental political strategy. Thus Lenin declared: "War is at the core politics ..." and "War is a part of the whole; that whole is politics."⁴

War is not the goal of Soviet strategy; the Soviets prefer to gain their objectives by pacific means—by forcing appeasement on the enemy. This consideration holds a significant place in Soviet strategy,* which judges the long-term trends and possibilities in determining what risks are worth taking in the short run. Thus, the Soviet army is generally offensively employed only in situations in which other methods of lesser risk are not considered feasible, but in which a considerable potential for advance is calculated to exist. Although the Soviet armed forces remain the basic instrument for advancing Soviet aims, very wide use is made of supplementary forms of struggle, such as subversion, sabotage, colonial rebellion, and satellite aggression; these are not dependent on a formal state of war or total involvement nor on the risks inherent in total war. (In certain situations, of course, the Politburo has to calculate the possibility of these more limited techniques' leading to general war.) The Soviet leadership does not consider local armed conflict as necessarily creating total involvement, as the case of the battles with Japan on the Manchurian and Mongolian frontiers in 1934-1939 demonstrates.

* Clausewitz once wrote that "A conqueror is always a peace lover ... he would like to make his entry into our state unopposed." Lenin underscored this line and commented marginally, "Ha, Ha! Pretty smart [*ostroumno*]!" And Stalin, in his interview with H. G. Wells in 1934, remarked: "Communists do not in the least idealize methods of violence.... They would be very pleased to drop violent methods if the ruling class agreed to give way to the working class."

The Soviets have always made great efforts in their propaganda to prove their "pacific" intentions. One of the more original of these was an attempt, in 1930, to prove the peacefulness of Soviet policy by

comparison with selected nearby capitalist states in terms of *soldier power per square kilometer*, so that the USSR, with only 27 soldiers per square kilometer, was contrasted with Rumania and Poland having 536 and 806 men per square kilometer, respectively. [See Kadishev, *Chto Dolzhen Znat' Molodoi Krasnoarmeets* ("What the Young Red Army Man Should Know"), 13th ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1930, p. 19.]

Soviet Strategy

Except that they are phases of policy with a differing component of armed force, no distinction between peace and war is meaningful in Soviet doctrine. Similarly, as one Soviet military writer has put it, "Military strategy is part of political strategy. The aims of political strategy are also the aims of military strategy."⁵ Military and political strategies are forms of "Soviet strategy" as a whole. Frunze, one of the leading early Soviet military theoreticians, said: "Questions of military strategy, political and economic strategy, are very closely interwoven into a unified whole."⁶ Tukhachevsky observed that "The conduct of war has ceased to be an affair of the strategist alone...."⁷ Another writer, Golubev, declared that "Strategy in the narrow military meaning of the term is a part of political strategy."⁸

The most complete understanding of this conception is found in the monumental work *Strategy* by the early Soviet theorist (and former Imperial major general) A. Svechin.⁹ Just as war is a continuation of politics, so, he concluded, military strategy is "a continuation, a part of, politics." Since it is necessary in contemporary affairs that "the highest state power conducts war," Svechin believed there should be an "integral strategy" (military and political) and an "integral strategist." Soviet strategy is indeed unified by the identity of the supreme military and political authority (and symbol), Stalin. This is accentuated in Soviet propaganda, which claims: "In Comrade Stalin alone does modern history see for the first time a great leader who combines the genius of a statesman and military leader of a new type."¹⁰

Soviet strategy, in the words of one Soviet general, "is founded on a realistic calculation and analysis of the political, economic, and military factors."¹¹ In Marxist terms, the dependence of Soviet strategy on such nonmilitary factors is expressed in the following passage: "Strategy ... expresses the character and tendency of development of the army and the

people, and depends on its economic, political, and cultural development, flowing from the class essence of the state and the level of development of the productive forces.”¹² As we shall see in a later discussion of Soviet concepts of military doctrine, the term “military science,” in Marshal Bulganin’s words, “in addition to questions of the military art, concerns questions of the economics and morale capabilities of the country ... and the enemy’s country.”¹³ And according to another writer, “Marxist-Leninist science teaches that politics exerts a decisive influence even on military-strategic plans.”¹⁴

The similarity of Soviet military and political doctrines leads to similar or identical considerations in planning and executing military and political strategy. Stalin’s “classical” definitions of strategy and tactics in Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist political ideology are repeated constantly by Soviet military authorities as defining military strategy and tactics, and usually no reference is made to the fact that Stalin’s definitions of these terms were issued in a political context. In this definition, Stalin himself speaks of “the analogy” between political and military strategy and uses military examples to illustrate his political definition. These definitions were formulated by Stalin on several occasions in the 1920’s, most explicitly in his work entitled “On the Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists” written in 1923.¹⁵ Because of the general unavailability in English and their unique completeness, several passages are reproduced here at some length:

The most important task of strategy is the determination of that basic direction along which the movement of the working class must go, and along which it is most favorable for the proletariat to deliver its main blow to the opponent for the realization of those ends set by the program. The plan of strategy is a plan for the organization of the decisive blow in that direction in which the blow can most quickly give the maximum results.

The basic features of political strategy might easily be sketched without special labor by resorting to analogy with military strategy, for instance, in the period of the Civil War at the time of the fight with Denikin. Everybody remembers the end of 1919, when Denikin stood before Tula. At that time there arose an interesting dispute among the military men over the question of where the decisive attack should be delivered to the armies of Denikin. Certain military men suggested the selection of the line from Tsaritsyn [Stalingrad] to Novorossisk for the main attack. Others, on the other hand, suggested the decisive attack should follow the line Voronezh to Rostov, in order by passing this line to split the armies of Denikin into two parts, and then crush them one at a time. The first plan, undoubtedly, had its favorable side, in that it counted on the taking of Novorossisk which would cut off the path of retreat for Denikin’s armies. But it was, on the other hand, unfavorable since it proposed our advance in regions (the Don region), hostile to the Soviet authority, and demanded, by this means, heavy sacrifices; and on the other hand it was dangerous since it opened to the armies

of Denikin the road to Moscow through Tula and Serpukhov. The second plan of the main blow was the only correct one, since, on the one hand it proposed the movement of our main groups in regions (Voronezh province—Donetz basin), sympathetic to the Soviet authority, and in view of that it did not demand special sacrifices; and on the other hand it disorganized the action of the main group of Denikin's troops moving on Moscow. The majority of the military men declared for the second plan, and thus was decided the fate of the war with Denikin.*

In other words, to define the direction of the basic blow means to predetermine the nature of operations in the whole period of war, to determine nine-tenths of the fate of the whole war. In this is the task of strategy.¹⁶

In this same article Stalin defined tactics as follows:

Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinate to it and serving it. Tactics are concerned not with war as a whole but with its separate episodes, with battles, with engagements. If strategy strives to win a war, or to bring to a conclusion, let us say, the struggle with Tsarism, then tactics, on the other hand, strive to win this or that engagement, this or that battle and successfully to conduct this or that campaign, this or that advance, that more or less correspond to the concrete situation of struggle at any given moment....

The most important task of tactics is the determination of those ways and means, those forms and methods of struggle, which most of all correspond to the concrete situation at a given moment, and are most certain to prepare for strategic successes. Therefore, the action of tactics, their results, must not be evaluated in themselves, not from the point of view of the immediate effect, but from the point of view of the tasks and possibilities of strategy.

There are moments when tactical successes facilitate the accomplishments of strategic tasks. For example, such was the case on the Denikin front at the end of 1919 at the freeing by our troops of Orel and Voronezh, when the successes of our cavalry before Voronezh and by the infantry before Orel created a situation favorable for the blow on Rostov. Such was the case in August 1917 in Russia, when the switch of the Petrograd [Leningrad] and Moscow Soviets to the side of the Bolsheviks created a new political situation, which facilitated the subsequent October blow by our Party.

There are also moments when tactical successes, brilliant in their immediate effect, but not corresponding to the strategic possibilities, create an "unexpected" situation, disastrous for our campaign. Such was the case with Denikin at the end of 1919 when, carried away by the easy successes of the swift and effective advance on Moscow, he stretched out his front from the Volga to the Dneper, and by this prepared the destruction of his armies. Such was the case in 1920 at the time of the war with the Poles, when we, underestimating the strength of the national factor in Poland and carried away by the easy success of our effective advance, took upon ourselves the too difficult task of breaking into Europe through Warsaw, rallied the vast majority of the Polish population against the Soviet troops, and created by this means a situation which nullified the successes of the Soviet troops before Minsk and Zhitomir, and which undermined the prestige of the Soviet authority in the West.

Finally, there are also moments when it is necessary to ignore tactical successes, consciously incurring tactical minuses and losses, in order to secure for oneself strategic pluses in the future. This frequently occurs in war, when one side, wishing to save the cadres of troops and to remove them from the blow of superior forces of the enemy, begins a planned retreat, and surrenders

without battle whole cities and regions in order to gain time and to collect its forces for new determined battles in the future. This was the case in Russia in 1918 at the time of the German attack, when our Party was forced to accept the Brest Peace, which entailed an enormous loss from the point of view of the immediate political effect at that moment, in order to preserve the alliance with the peasantry, thirsting for peace, and to obtain a breathing spell, to create a new army and to secure, by this means, strategic gains in the future.

In other words, tactics cannot subordinate themselves to the transitory interests of the moment; they must not be guided by considerations of immediate political effect, they must still less be torn from the soil and create castles in the air—tactics must be adapted to the tasks and possibilities of strategy.¹⁷

* Stalin is generally credited with being the author of the second plan, while Trotsky favored the first.

Stalin's use of examples from military strategy and tactics to illustrate his definition of political strategy and tactics indicates not only a close similarity in the basic considerations of each in Soviet thought, but also the essentially military frame of reference of Soviet political strategy.

Depending on the concrete circumstances of each case, political means may be used to assist in a basically military effort (such as front-line propaganda by leaflets in a war) or are claimed to inspire military successes,¹⁸ or, in a broader context, military means may be used to create more advantageous economic, morale, and political situations, as, for example, the creation of satellite regimes in eastern Europe after "liberation" by the Red Army.

Soviet strategy is considered to possess a scientific form of decision-making and planning. Its basis is a presumed sober "calculation of the relation of forces [*sootnoshenie sil*]" between the Soviet and opposing forces. This process of calculation and its role in Soviet policy-making has been examined in detail elsewhere by this author;¹⁹ here, we shall merely note its basis for Soviet strategic planning. As Major General Talensky, of the General Staff, put it:

The strength of Stalinist strategy consists in its basis on the correct calculation of the real relation of opportunities, forces, tendencies, regarding them not as static, but dynamic, in development. Precisely that realistic calculation of all the operating factors secures the effectiveness of Stalinist strategy, setting its decisive aims.²⁰

In Major General Galatinov's words: "Strategy points out the aims of the armed forces ... these aims must be realistic; they must correspond to the relation of forces...."²¹ This "relation of forces" in strategic decision-making

is more than the estimated balance of relative capabilities in being, although, as the Soviet manual on *General Tactics* stated: “The relation of forces is clarified by the comparison of one’s own forces and capabilities with the forces and probable capabilities of the enemy.”²² This over-all estimate of the situation is of course usual in all armies, but its systematic employment in political policy-making is distinctively Soviet.²³ Although the criteria of calculation and definition of the forces calculated are hardly “scientific,” especially in political decisions, the principles discussed in [Part II](#) of this study should clarify them in the military context. In military and political strategy, Bolshevik virtues are attributed to this calculation and to the consequent strategy and strategic plans. Thus, Professor Leonov explains that “The strength of Soviet strategy is in its correctness, insight, purposefulness, in guaranteeing the plan by all necessary means... .”²⁴ The “relation of forces” is considered manipulable, and Soviet strategy is praised especially for its abilities to alter this relation most effectively. To note but one example, as Major General Talensky wrote, “Stalinist strategy demonstrated a method of actively altering the relation of forces [by active defense]....”²⁵

The relation of forces is the criterion determining advance or retreat in any situation—and no situation is viewed as static. In case of a favorable relation of forces, i.e., one permitting (or expected to permit) successful advances, it is mandatory to realize this potentiality for advance (with the single reservation that potential tactical gains must only be made if they are strategically advisable). This stress on advance in Bolshevik political doctrine may be one of the reasons for the stress given to the principle of the offensive in Soviet military doctrine. Similarly, retreat is undertaken (aside from minor local withdrawals from “probing” to determine the precise relation of forces) only as the necessary consequence of an adverse shift in the relation of forces.

This Soviet calculation of the relation of forces is contrasted with strategic planning by other (German, during the recent war) nations. Thus, “The strategic plan of the Supreme Command of the Red Army was diametrically opposed to the Hitlerite plan.... The plan of the Soviet command was based upon a correct estimate of the operational position and the real relation of forces....”²⁶

German strategy is described in terms directly opposed to the Soviet “virtues”; the German calculation is “adventurist,” meaning either

overestimation of their relative capability, as in the first quotation cited below, or entirely lacking, as in the second (where the Soviet “plan” is counterpoised implicitly against the German “wandering” in strategy). Thus,

Comrade Stalin characterized the strategy of the Germans thus: “Their strategy was defective in that, as a rule, it underestimated the forces and capabilities of the enemy and overestimated its own forces. In contradistinction to adventurist German-Fascist strategy, Stalinist strategy is founded on a stable scientific base, giving determining significance not to the temporary, transitory moments, but to the permanently-operating factors...”*

The same wandering in strategy [as with Falkenhayn and Ludendorff] existed in the Hitlerite command in the present war. From the “Blitzkrieg,” after the defeat on the Soviet-German front, it passed to a strategy of dragging on the war by unsuccessfully trying to freeze combat actions at strengthened fronts. Of course, this confusion and wandering is observed not only in Germany. In the years 1939–1940 the French General Staff began the war guided by just such a strategy, artificially attempting at once to give the war a positional character. But the essence of the matter is the same...,²⁷

* The “permanently operating factors” are discussed in Chapter 2, pp. 34 and 35.

In general, Soviet (like Western) military literature is marked by a dearth of explicit discussion of strategy.

Although tactics is not discussed at this point, it should be noted that strategic maintenance of the objective is coupled with a high degree of tactical flexibility in the selection of methods of achieving that objective. As Stalin explained, “Tactics deal with the forms of struggle....” “Tactics change in accordance with the flow and ebb [of history].”²⁸ This pliability in tactical modes of achieving the planned aim imparts a realistic implementation to Soviet strategy; and it is essential to realize that their ethic opposes “adventuristic” moves not corresponding to the potentialities offered by their estimation of the relation of forces at least as strongly as it requires advance where the “objective” estimation permits.

This tactical flexibility is, however, not delegated to the lower operational echelons of command. Its military significance is small and perhaps more disadvantageous than useful, inasmuch as the top leadership alone can be permitted this great flexibility if the “plan” and strategy are to be maintained. The question is one of expediency in selecting the forms of struggle, military or political. As Lenin often said:

We Marxists have always been proud of the fact that by a strict calculation of the mass forces and mutual class relations we have determined the expediency of this or that form of struggle.

What are the principal demands every Marxist must make when examining the question of the forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism is distinguished from all primitive forms of socialism by the fact that it does not bind the movement to any particular form of struggle; it recognizes the most varied forms. ... At different moments of economic evolution, and depending on varying political, national, cultural, and other social conditions, different forms of struggle assume prominence, become the chief form of struggle, whereupon, in their turn, the secondary and supplementary forms of struggle also change their aspect.²⁹

What remains constant is the need for struggle; this basic unalterable conflict to annihilation of the two basic hostile forces (“classes,” “systems,” “camps”) is unchanging.

Cold War

“Cold war” is the term widely used in the West to signify the Soviet-induced situation of continuing struggle during nominal peace. Cold war assumes two primary forms: political warfare and nonmilitary or limited military violence. The tactical flexibility of Soviet policy determines which of these forms of struggle is to be used.

Political or psychological warfare, while no longer considered an “irregular” form of warfare, is unconventional in the sense that it does not involve military action. The Soviets have become masters at combining political, economic, psychological, and other “nonmilitary” forms of struggle with armed conflict, often substituting the former altogether. Strikes and sabotage, false lulling “peace” campaigns, and the mobilizing of all discontents to the Red banner have often proved successful where force of arms alone would have been folly. In 4 years, the 23,000 Bolsheviks of February, 1917, seized and consolidated in their hands all power in the vastest nation on earth. How was this possible in the face of the (albeit phlegmatic) opposition of fourteen foreign powers, in addition to the opposition of virtually every other political group in, and most of the military talent of, the Russian Empire? “Peace, land and bread!” This simple slogan was the most effective weapon in anyone’s arsenal; and the Bolsheviks used it to seize power, deluding millions who awoke too late to see that Soviet rule would lead to less of all three.

The Soviet regime has amply demonstrated its ability to use political warfare as effectively in international politics as domestically. The creation of an “iron curtain” is a striking example of an instance in which both internal Soviet and international affairs are widely influenced.

In addition to propaganda and similar nonviolent forms of political warfare, active and passive sabotage, fifth-column subversion and internal disruption, colonial rebellion, and satellite aggression are unconventional forms of warfare widely employed by the Soviets. This is not the place in which to investigate these forms of struggle, which have been examined in detail elsewhere,³⁰ except to note their role in Soviet strategy. They are used, in conjunction with conventional means of warfare, where they seem more appropriate and effective but are not dependent on a formal state of war or on total hostilities.

In any future war with the West, the local Communist Parties and Soviet agents (including, possibly, some introduced by air or sea) will do all in their power, which in such countries as France and Italy may reach considerable proportions, to aid the Soviet military machine and to impede the Western powers. Such actions will be decentralized in operation but centralized in over-all control, although advance notice of a Soviet-initiated and “intended” war is not likely.*

* By “intended” war is meant one planned for the time at which the blow is struck; it is possible that a Soviet miscalculation of the point to which Western patience can be strained may lead to war at a time unintended by them for the commencement of total hostilities.

All may not agree with this tentative conclusion that the foreign Communist Parties will not be specifically informed in advance; but the Politburo is not likely to risk our learning their plans through an agent highly placed in a foreign Party.

To these types of nonmilitary direct violence must be added the now familiar techniques of fomenting, encouraging, and covertly aiding indigenous or imported local rebellions, especially in colonial or former colonial areas. The Vietnamese, Burmese, Malayan, Indonesian, and Philippine examples are all in evidence at the time of writing. Iran, in 1946, and Greece, in 1947–1948, are notable past failures; China, a notable success. In most cases, the technique has been Communist infiltration and subtle seizure of local unpoliticized movements; but the result has been another form of Soviet expansion of influence and splintering of counter-Soviet efforts, capabilities, and unity of purpose. Concern with colonial revolution has always been prominent in Leninism-Stalinism and has survived the sharply reduced expectation of a Western proletarian revolution.

Stalin has repeatedly pointed out the role of the colonials in the great struggle between the two camps:

The task of the Communists is to destroy the century old sleep of the oppressed peoples of the East, to infect the workers and peasants of those countries with the liberating spirit of the revolution, to arouse them to the struggle against imperialism, and in such a way to deprive world imperialism of its “reliable” rear, of its “inexhaustible” reserves.³¹

The North Korean invasion of The Republic of Korea and subsequent Communist Chinese intervention on behalf of the North Koreans are instances of a different kind of local disruption—satellite invasion. Unless checked by its effective recognition as being only another veiled form of Soviet policy, this technique offers further possibilities in both Central and South-Eastern Europe and in Asia.

In the current Soviet version of the older Communist idea of world revolution—unlike the conception of the period prior to 1921—the Soviet Army is considered as being the main active instrument (in some cases indirectly, as in Eastern and Central Europe after 1945, when its mere presence or nearness permitted more subtle and economical forms of seizure of power), aided by local Communists, thus inverting the earlier expectation regarding and the reliance on indigenous action abroad as being the chief force, perhaps with the Red Army as an auxiliary. Rebellion in underdeveloped areas may still utilize indigenous forces as the primary instrument, as is done in China and Indo-China; but an essential difference remains—the control is exercised in Moscow. This change, of course, reflects the shift from “the world proletariat” to “the Soviet power” as the central actor in the drama of the world revolution.

In 1939, at the Eighteenth Party Congress, the then head of the Political Administration of the Red Army, Commissar Mekhlis, declared:

To eliminate the danger of foreign capitalist intervention, the *History of the CPSU(B)* says, the capitalist encirclement must be destroyed. The time is not far off, comrades, when our army, which by its prevailing ideology is an international army, will, in retaliation to the insolent attack of the enemy, help the workers of the aggressor countries to emancipate themselves from the yoke of fascism, from the yoke of capitalist slavery, and to eliminate the capitalist encirclement of which Comrade Stalin spoke. (Loud applause.)³²

This was the last such statement, one already infrequent after the mid-1930's. Recent Soviet propaganda, especially at home, has not preached a “war of liberation,” which theoretically is the most “just” war and a highly proper

Communist battle cry, but rather has stressed only defense against imperialist aggression. In the Finnish war of 1939-1940, defense against alleged Finnish frontier firing was claimed; the appeal of a liberation war would be even less today. Any war will be called “defensive,” because national Russian support can best be mobilized in defense against aggression (actual or alleged).

CHAPTER 2

THE SOVIET CONCEPTION OF MILITARY DOCTRINE

Military doctrine may be defined as that body of assumptions and beliefs about military science and art, strategy, and tactics which is accepted in any armed force as being the basic guide for its conduct of military affairs. Soviet military doctrine, like Soviet policy and strategy in general, is the product of a dynamic conjunction of ideological and pragmatic motivations.

The Formative Debates over Military Doctrine

In terms of the development of Soviet military doctrine, the Marxian legacy is subordinate to the early experience of the Bolshevik revolutionaries, particularly to their military experience of the Civil and Polish wars from 1918 to 1921, as debated in the early 1920's.

Marxism had not determined or defined the military doctrine of the Party or of the future proletarian state before 1917. One Soviet general recently declared publicly that "It is well known that Marx and Engels did not provide a solution to the problem of what the army of the victorious proletariat must be like, or what its organizational principles must be."¹ Nevertheless, Engels certainly opened up the problem indirectly when he declared that the "emancipation of the proletariat, in its turn, will have its reflection and will create its special and entirely new military method."²

Between 1921 and 1924 there were extensive debates and arguments over the nature of military doctrine and what its principles should be for the new

Soviet state.³ These debates were concerned with certain practical questions, the chief of which were as follows:

- (a) whether dual (commissar-commander) or unified command of army units was preferable,
- (b) whether former Tsarist officers who had volunteered or who had been impressed should be permitted to remain in the Red Army,
- (c) whether discipline should be strict or “voluntary,”
- (d) whether the army should be entirely regular or a militia-partisan organization,
- (e) whether the Principle of the Offensive, due to the dynamic revolutionary character of the Bolshevik ideology, had a unique and primary role in Soviet doctrine, and
- (f) whether the Principle of Maneuver, because of its successful employment in the Civil War and presumed close link with “the people,” had a special Soviet significance.

We are concerned here with two additional questions raised by these debates; namely, whether there was a unique proletarian or Marxian military doctrine, and whether or not this doctrine was unified.

Frunze and Gusev, who launched the drive for a new unified proletarian military doctrine, were bitterly opposed by Trotsky (then People’s Commissar for War), by most of the former high Tsarist officers, and, on most questions, by Tukhachevsky.⁴ The former group held a militant attitude toward creating a military doctrine along the lines of launching full-scale military support of the Marxist world revolution. As Frunze stated in this debate, “Between our proletarian state and the entire remaining bourgeois world there can be only one condition—long, unyielding, desperate war....”⁵ Frunze believed that the “character of the military doctrine accepted by the army of any state is determined by the character of the general political line of the social class which stands at its head.”⁶ The Imperial General Staff, he said, had no unified doctrine, but many and various views.⁷ Frunze defined a unified military doctrine as

the teaching of the army in a given state, establishing the character of construction of the armed forces of the country, the methods of combat preparation of troops, their leadership on the basis of the ruling views in the state on the character of the military tasks lying before it and the capabilities

for deciding them, flowing from the class essence of the state, and determined by the level of development of productive forces of the country.⁸

Trotsky objected vigorously, not to the idea that Soviet military doctrine would be influenced by the class character of the state, but to a premature attempt to determine “the class content” of Soviet military science. He maintained that there were four basic elements composing military doctrine:

- (a) the basic (class) orientation of the country in internal policy,
- (b) the international orientation of the workers’ state,
- (c) the construction of the Red Army in relation to the state, and
- (d) the strategic and tactical knowledge of the Red Army.⁹

The dispute raged over this last point. Trotsky believed that there was a military science applicable equally to capitalists and proletarians, while Frunze insisted on a completely new unified proletarian doctrine. Svechin, formerly a major general on the Imperial General Staff, argued that as soon as a dogmatic military doctrine was officially adopted, all disagreement and innovation in military theory would be forbidden, thus checking further progress.¹⁰

The debates ultimately ended with the fall of Trotsky and his replacement by Frunze in 1924. Since that time, little attention has been given to the question of military doctrine. No open debates have occurred. The most complete recent statement (1946) on the subject follows:

Military doctrine presents itself: (1) in the establishment of a unified principle of the construction of the armed forces of the country; (2) the establishment of unified methods of the combat preparation of troops; (3) the elaboration of tactics and strategy, the art of leading troops on the field of battle, on the basis of tasks set before the given state and the level of productive forces which it has attained.

The united military doctrine corresponds to the social structure of the state. In the Soviet state it flows from its socialist principles. It is united in our country in the full sense of the word. In the Soviet Union the views on the construction and actions of the armed forces are united. Fundamentally they consist of the facts that the Red Army must be a regular army, strictly disciplined, having a united military leadership, that the Red Army must correspond to first-rate contemporary technology.¹¹

It is significant that the specific aspects listed in the concluding sentence of this statement were all central in the original debates of the early 1920’s; nothing has been explicitly added to the concept since then.

Simultaneously with the bitter debates over a “unified military doctrine,” there were some mild and inconclusive exchanges of opinion as to whether “military affairs” was properly a science or an art.¹² Frunze and Trotsky largely conceded military affairs to be both an art and a science: an art inasmuch as talent was concerned, and a science insofar as the theory of the art could be taught. Thus, the early Soviet military experts resolved the role and definition of military science and military art in a conventional manner.

“Stalinist” Military Science

The origins of the now much-vaunted and superior “Stalinist” military science were found in some of Stalin’s Civil War actions, which are now described as its bases. It is significant that none of Stalin’s actions or thoughts were even considered worthy of discussion and debate in the early 1920’s. The true role of Stalin in developing “Soviet” or “Stalinist” military science is obscured by the grossly exaggerated nature of all Soviet discussions, which credit him with having created it entirely and alone. Desiring to exclude Lenin from sharing merit in this field, Stalin declared:

... Lenin did not consider himself an expert on military affairs. He did not consider himself an expert on military affairs not only in the past, before the October Revolution, but even after the October Revolution down to the end of the Civil War. In the Civil War Lenin obliged us, then still young comrades of the Central Committee, “to study military affairs precisely.” As for himself, he frankly told us that it was already too late for him to study military affairs.¹³ This, of course, has been repeated and embellished in the Soviet

press. Major General Isayev recently wrote regarding Stalin’s military ability:

Neither before nor after the October Revolution did Lenin ... consider himself an expert on military affairs. Believing that it was already too late for him to make a thorough study of military science, he demanded that his younger colleagues on the Central Committee of the Party should perfect themselves in this intricate and very important science. This task fell chiefly and mainly on Lenin’s closest and principal associate, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin ... Comrade Stalin not only thoroughly mastered military science, but in the very fires of the Civil War worked out and brilliantly applied the principles of his military science and strategical art, a science of an entirely new type.¹⁴

As with many Aspects of Soviet military doctrine, long conventional or even obsolescent ideas are later inflated beyond their original importance and are blandly described as innovations of Stalinist military science. Thus, the operation in overcoming Fort Krasnaia Gorka in 1919, in which Stalin participated, seems in actual fact not to have differed from numerous operations in modern warfare; yet it has been described recently by a Soviet general as

the first example of the organization and brilliant execution of complicated combined operations of land, naval and air forces. Comrade Stalin knew how to evaluate correctly in a short time the forces and potentialities of the enemy, to divine his intention, to select correctly the direction of the main blow, and capsizing and breaking the obsolete thesis of naval science, successfully to execute an outstanding offensive operation.^{[15](#)}

The only basis for such claims is the brusque telegram which Stalin sent to Lenin at the time, in which he said:

The naval specialists asserted that the taking of Krasnaia Gorka from the sea contradicted naval science. I can only bewail such so-called science. The swift seizure of the Hill was due to very rude interference on my part... even to the changing of orders on the sea and in the narrows, and giving my own.

I consider it my duty to declare that I will act in this manner in the future despite all my regard for science.^{[16](#)}

Referring to Stalin's genius as a military theoretician, Marshal Bulganin credited him with having "created a military science that boldly stepped beyond the limits of the art of war and thereby broke with the traditions of the old, 'classical' military science which covered only questions concerning tactics and strategy."^{[17](#)}

Military Science and Art

Military science embraces military art (strategy and tactics) plus certain questions of a supermilitary nature, such as national morale, economics, and politics. Bulganin explained that "military science is a conception more wide and all-encompassing than military art."

Military art is an integral part of military science and encompasses tactics, the operating art, and strategy, that is, concerns the study of questions relating to the means of conducting military actions and war as a whole.

Military science, in addition to the questions of the military art, concerns questions of economic and morale capabilities of the country.¹⁸

Bulganin stated that “although good strategic and operational plans are important factors for winning a war, by themselves ... they are insufficient to achieve victory.”¹⁹ Western military science is said to lack such a perception and such an account of the morale and economic factors, and Bulganin even terms this the “greatest error,” for he stressed again and again the need for an ability to “know and calculate the economic and morale capabilities of one’s own country, and the enemy’s country.”²⁰

Military science, then, is “the military art” plus consideration of the not strictly military factors—morale, economic, and psychological-political considerations—or, more properly, consideration of the relative capabilities of the Soviet power and that of the enemy in regard to these basic potentials.

Endeavoring to clarify the meaning of “military art,” Marshal Voroshilov said: “Soviet military art, as a component part of a military science that had assimilated the experience of the past wars and had adapted it to the socialist nature of the state, has armed our command cadres with theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of strategy, operational skill, tactics, the organization and training of troops and has thus allowed them to understand correctly the character of war, to comprehend the nature of modern operations and battle and also the role of various types of troops, their importance and practical employment.”²¹ Marshal Vasilevsky and Major General Isayev have defined these terms similarly.²²

Soviet military doctrine explicitly divides the military art into three component levels: strategy, the “operating art,” and tactics. This distinction, unique to Soviet and recent German doctrines, was formulated by the former Imperial Major General Svechin in his fundamental work, *Strategy* (1926).²³ The term “operating art” is unusual to the Western military man and may seem to overlap both strategy and tactics. Described by the Soviets as “the organization and conduct of military operations,” the *operating art* occupies a middle position between *strategy*, the study of conduct of war, and *tactics*, the study of battle.²⁴ The *operating art* consists of five divisions:

- (a) the planning and organizing of operations,
- (b) the study of different forms of operations (offensive, defensive),
- (c) the command of operations,
- (d) the organization and operation of the rear, and
- (e) the study of the enemy.²⁵

More specifically, the *operating art* is “the theory and practice of organizing and conducting Front [Army Group] and Army operations.”²⁶ Thus, over-all coordinated operations by a group of Fronts are “strategic” operations (coordinated and often commanded by the *Stavka* [GHQ]), whereas corps and divisions are considered merely tactical formations.

Strategy is distinguished from the *operating art* as follows: “In military terminology ‘strategy’ denotes: (a) the study of leading, by the preparation and conduct of war, of all the armed forces of a state, (b) the corresponding branch of practical military activity by the organs of the high command and general staff.”²⁷

Thus, the “military art” comprises these three levels of the organizing and conducting of hostilities by arms.

The “Superiority” of Soviet Military Science

The victory over Nazi Germany in the recent war has been presented, since 1946, as having been achieved solely by Soviet arms—in spite of alleged Western perfidy in attempting to obtain a separate peace and in failing to open a second front until the fighting was over. Accordingly, Soviet military theoreticians state that this victory proved Soviet military science to be superior to that of the Germans and to be the sole advanced, true military science in the world. Stalin himself sounded this note in a letter published in 1947:

We are obliged from the point of view of the interests of our cause, and the military science of our time, to criticize not only Clausewitz, but also Moltke, Schlieffen, Ludendorff, Keitel and the other bearers of the military ideology in Germany. In the past thirty years Germany has twice thrust the world into bloody war, and both times she proved beaten. Was that by chance? Of course not. Does that not mean that not only in its aim, but also in its military ideology, Germany did not pass the test? It means this indubitably. It is well-known to all what respect all the military men of the world,

including even our Russian military men, held toward the military authority of Germany. Is it necessary to dispense with this unmerited respect? It is necessary to end it. And for that criticism is necessary especially from our side, from the side of the victors over Germany.²⁸

It was then but a short step further to say that, of all the military sciences put to the test during the war, Soviet military science was found to be the only one able to find satisfactory solutions of the problems set by modern warfare.²⁹

Soviet Principles of War

Beginning with Jomini and Clausewitz, modern military theory has sought to express military doctrine in terms of a distillate of “principles of war” (sometimes termed factors, axioms, or maxims) which represent fundamental assumptions and operating principles of warfare. The U.S. War Department compiled nine Principles of War in 1921 which, with only minor rephrasing, remain its doctrine today.³⁰ These principles are Maintenance of the Objective; The Offensive; Mass (or the Concentration of Force); Economy of Force; Movement (or Mobility, or Maneuver); Surprise; Security; Cooperation (or Unity of Command); and Simplicity. These differ little from the principles recognized by other Western nations.³¹

Military analysts have compiled other lists of war principles. Clausewitz, while avoiding any specific enumeration, emphasized five: concentration of forces, reserves, initiative, pursuit, and surprise. Fuller listed five “prerequisites of victory”: security, surprise, mobility, concentration of forces, and cooperation. Liddell Hart and Guderian, in essence, reduce them to two: surprise and mobility. Foch stressed freedom of action, economy of force, and simplicity; Erfurth, surprise; and von Leeb, the defensive. The ultimate, of course, is General Forrest’s famous maxim which, itself, is the essence of simplicity: “I alius gits thar fustest with the mostest”—embodying the principles of surprise, mobility, the objective, the offensive, mass, and economy of force.

In the formative days of Soviet military doctrine, it was largely taken for granted that there were Principles of War, but their general nature and specific composition was debated. The advocates of a new unified

proletarian military doctrine did not formulate their doctrine in terms of enumerated principles, but they did stress special principles, primarily the offensive and maneuver. Others disagreed and felt that there was a military science more or less applicable to proletarians as well as to capitalists, and that only the context of a state's policy and the quality of its commanders and soldiers caused national strategies to differ. Trotsky, who led this latter group, referred several times to the fact that there are "certain principles, such as the economy of forces and surprise"³² and met with no objection to principles as such, but only to his derogation of the stress laid on special "proletarian" principles of maneuver and the offensive. Trotsky himself, however, said: "War cannot have eternal laws."³³ The various Soviet *Field Regulations* have all contained explicit and implicit principles of war, although they are never officially enumerated as such.³⁴

During the recent war, the Soviets followed Stalin's example in repeating certain principles which he formulated first in 1918 and repeated in 1941. This authoritative formulation of principles has received wide repetition in the Soviet military press and may now be considered as being the Soviet equivalent of the enumerated principles of war held by various foreign military establishments. These principles are termed the *permanently operating factors* which "determine the course and outcome of war." They are listed here in Stalin's own formulation:

- (a) the stability of the rear,
- (b) the morale of the army,
- (c) the quantity and quality of divisions,
- (d) the armament of the army,
- (e) the organizing ability of the command personnel.³⁵

These *permanently operating factors* are contrasted with the *transitory factors*, of which only one has been specified—surprise (since it was the only one Stalin mentioned, the context being the period following the successful German use of surprise in assaulting the Soviet Union).

Many reiterations of these "factors" have appeared in the Soviet press.³⁶ Concerning their importance, Major General Isayev has said:

We know that bourgeois military thinkers endeavored repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, to discover these factors, first declaring that the secret of victory lay in the "eternal and immutable" principles of the art of war, then that the secret of victory lies in the "supernatural intuition of the general

commander.” J. V. Stalin proved irrefutably, for the first time in the history of the art of war, that the issue of war is determined not by temporary and transitory circumstances, such as surprise, but the permanently operating factors....”³⁷

The Soviet formulation of these five *permanently operating factors* does not necessarily mean that other principles are not equally basic in Soviet military doctrine, but only that they are not explicitly formulated as such. Any attempt to add to (or to subtract from) Stalin’s enumeration would be construed as a derogatory attitude toward Stalin’s genius in formulating these principles. Voroshilov has stated that concern with adequate reserves is “no less important,” but this is the sole exception, stated by a Politburo member, and is explained by reference to early Civil War injunctions by Stalin on the importance of reserves.³⁸

It is significant that these five (or six) factors are elevated to the importance ascribed, at least verbally, to them. The stress placed on the *stability of the rear* may betray a Soviet fear of instability and unreliability in their own country. Together with the *morale of the army*, it indicates an acute awareness of the need to maintain strong morale both at the front and in the rear and at the same time to weaken the enemy’s morale. After all, the Soviets came into power largely through successfully contributing to and capitalizing on the disintegration of the Imperial Russian army. The interest in the *quantity and quality of divisions* and in the *armament of the army* indicates a high degree of concern for this material means of war (although recognized as essentially important in all armies, these factors are not usually considered basic principles of war). The stress placed on the *organizing ability of the command personnel* is indicative of a special need for overcoming other deterrents to initiative and securing the organizing ability of officers. The terms “leadership,” “high level of military science,” or even just “military ability” are not stressed—it is the “organizing ability,” the ability to secure the execution of orders (not to formulate them) which is emphasized in this particular formulation. Other Principles of War, of equal or even greater importance, exist in Soviet military doctrine. Some of these (the offensive, concentration of force, maneuver, and cooperation or combined action) are probably more important relatively than in Western military doctrines. Some principles of great importance (mandatory annihilation, determination of the direction of the main blow) are not recognized as principles in the West.

In the absence of any comprehensive statement of the fundamental principles of Soviet military doctrine, it is necessary to devote considerable attention to the formulation and analysis of principles both specified and implied in Soviet regulations and military literature and, of course, engraved in the record of the recent war.

CHAPTER 3

FUNDAMENTAL INFLUENCES ON SOVIET MILITARY DOCTRINE

Marxism-Leninism

The success of the October Revolution created a situation novel in modern history: the Bolshevik leaders found themselves occupying simultaneously the roles of the vanguard of an international revolutionary movement and the leadership of a sovereign state. Unlike the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution before its consummation had a developed and integrated ideology to which it was dedicated in advance, and which prescribed a program of action continuing effectively long after the initial consolidation of the revolutionary regime. For the first time, the Marxian ideology (in this instance in its Bolshevik form) was anchored to a territorial-national base, and the dialectical antipodes of “theory” and “practice” were tested in empirical action. The ostensible interrelated unity of these dialectical opposites forewarned of no crisis in application, and none has been admitted. Nonetheless, the history of the Soviet regime tends to support the conclusion that Soviet policy, in its operational strategy, has been the product of the adaptation of an extremely comprehensive ideology to a very complex, and often disagreeing, world of actualities, in such a manner as to preserve at least the facade of the former but with significant modifications of its substance.

Military doctrine was less affected than many other spheres of activity by the revolutionary impact of establishing Bolshevik Marxism. Although certain principles were claimed by some as being uniquely proletarian, these

principles were not in fact all-encompassing, nor were they always adopted, even in their limited claims.

“War is not sought as a goal by Marxism or by current Bolshevik Communism. Lenin wrote in 1915 that “Socialists have always adjudged war between peoples as a barbarous and beastly affair.”¹ Although the Soviets would prefer to gain their objectives by pacific means, wars are nonetheless believed to be inevitable while there are classes or, as in recent years, the “two hostile camps” of capitalism and Soviet Communism. “Wars,” Lenin wrote, “are inevitable so long as society is divided into classes, so long as the exploitation of man by man exists.”² The Bolshevik view is that only wars in self-defense of a proletarian state or civil wars of “liberation,” in aid of another rising worker-peasant or colonial “proletariat,” are “just” wars. Stalin summarized these ideas when he wrote:

The Bolsheviks held [and hold] that there are two kinds of war:

- a) *Just* wars, wars that are not wars of conquest but wars of liberation, waged to defend the people from foreign attack and from attempts to enslave them, or to liberate the people from capitalist slavery, or, lastly, to liberate colonies and dependent countries from the yoke of imperialism; and
- b) *Unjust* wars, wars of conquest, waged to conquer and enslave foreign countries and foreign nations.

Wars of the first kind the Bolsheviks supported. As to wars of the second kind, the Bolsheviks maintained that a resolute struggle must be waged against them to the point of revolution and the overthrow of one’s own imperialist government.³

Marxist and Soviet thinking, of course, assumes that all policy (and doctrine) is fundamentally based on the inherent material-economic dialectical course of history, which has been charted by Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin. Further detailed discussion of the Marxist and Soviet theories of war would but amplify these basic ideas.⁴ It is clear that any war in which the Soviet Union might engage would, by that very fact of Soviet involvement, be a “just” war; e.g., in June, 1941, the unjust imperialist war suddenly became transformed into a just war (in Soviet propaganda to foreign Communists, simultaneously with its transformation internally into the Great Fatherland War of the Russian people^{*}).

^{*} This is frequently translated, more freely, as the “Great Patriotic War,” but *Velikaia Otechestvennaia Voina* is translated “Great Fatherland War” in this study. It is occasionally even called the Second Great Fatherland War, emphasizing its parallel to the Fatherland War of 1812.

Marx and Engels had devoted considerable attention to military affairs, but without creating “Marxian” principles or bases which could serve as the military doctrine of the new Marxian state. Engels, in particular, had been something of a military analyst. His unsigned contemporary commentaries on the Crimean War in the *New York Tribune* at that time were attributed to the popular American general, Scott; and his monograph *Po and the Rhine*, to the Prussian general, von Pfuell.⁵ Engels, in turn, was strongly impressed by Clausewitz, whose influence on Soviet military doctrine is reviewed in the following section of this chapter. Engels stated:

Nothing depends upon economic conditions so much as the army and fleet. Aims, composition, organization, tactics and strategy are in direct dependence on the given degree of production development and the means of communication.⁶

In stating the usual Marxist view that “War is a social phenomenon,” the Soviet military theorist Shaposhnikov went on to note that “War is an expression of social life which, although it serves for the achievement of political aims, has however its own laws, its own ‘spirit,’ its own nature.”⁷

In actual development, the legacy of Marx and Engels has played a rather small role in terms of conscious, concrete influence. It has, of course, had a tremendous influence in such ways as forming the basis for the entire system of political-ideological pervasion of the army in political administration, morale evaluation and control, officer selection and promotion, and the fusion of the military and political aspects of Soviet strategy. But as Trotsky argued, in 1921:

Marxism does not give ready recipes. Least of all can it give one in the realm of military construction. But here too it has given us method. If it is true that war is a continuation of politics, only by other means, then the army is a continuation and crowning of the entire social-state organization, only with bayonets for a superiority.⁸

Superiority over the bourgeois-capitalists in military affairs was seen by Trotsky as being due to the “scientific method of orientation—Marxism,” yet Trotsky argued most strongly against Frunze and the other advocates of adopting “proletarian” principles of war and doctrine. As Trotsky declared: “We enter the military question, proceeding not from any ‘military doctrine’ as a sum of dogmatic tenets, but from the Marxist analysis of the requirements of ... the working class....”⁹

Two practical matters were of immediate and continuing direct importance, however, and should be discussed here: the unique institution of “military commissars,” and the organizational form of the Red Army.

By decree of April 6, 1918, the role of military commissars was clarified. It was their duty to watch the political reliability and questionable loyalty of the former Tsarist officers who came to occupy a very significant part of the command of the Red Army. Among them were counterrevolutionaries, and it was a practical necessity to see that gross military “errors” having a counterrevolutionary effect were not perpetrated. The institution of military commissars had, in fact, been introduced originally by Kerensky, of the Provisional Government, in 1917, at the time of the attempted counterrevolution of General Kornilov.

The experience of the Civil War showed the awkwardness of dual command—the commissar being required to countersign orders and having the right to countermand them. Stalin, as commissar at Tsaritsyn and elsewhere, used his power to execute large numbers of officer-commanders and even to countermand orders from the commander in chief. This matter was also debated in the early 1920’s. Although all agreed on the importance of a political apparatus and indoctrination (except, of course, many former Imperial officers, who remained silent), the question of a single or united command, as opposed to dual command, was at issue.¹⁰

This problem continued to plague the Soviet leadership. In 1925, the military commissars were made subordinate to the commanders; they were reinstated at the time of the purges in 1937 (the former head of the Political Administration, Gamarnik, committing suicide); after the Finnish fiasco, they were again reduced to a subordinate status in August, 1940; they were restored to equality following the early post-invasion defeats in July, 1941; and they were again reduced at the height of the battle for Stalingrad in November, 1942. It should be stressed that at all times there has remained at least a *zampolit* (Deputy Commander for Political Affairs), as there is at present.* In 1929 there was an attempt to train “unicommanders, combining command and political duties, but results were not considered adequate and the program was dropped.¹¹ All officers are, of course, expected to be good Communists (presently 86.4 per cent are Party members), and all *zampolits* are expected to be well versed in military affairs.

* Discussion of the present apparatus is found in Chapter 14, pp. 240 and 241, in the section entitled “Indoctrination.”

Another issue raised, by supposedly Marxian influence, was the organization of the army. The advocates of a “proletarian military doctrine,” many of whom had themselves begun their military careers as irregular “partisans” (as, for instance, did Voroshilov), maintained a preference for this type of loose organizational and command structure. Partisan and militia organizations, it was claimed, kept a closer tie between the army and the people and were therefore more Marxian.

The Red Army, founded by decree on January 12, 1918, became a reality on February 23, 1918 (its celebrated “birthday”).¹² On June 10, 1918, a resolution of the Soviet called for the creation of a “regular army” to replace the *partizanshchina* (partisanism; the pejorative form).¹³

Prior to the Revolution, and indeed for some months thereafter, Lenin and Bolshevik leaders favored “partisan struggle,” “a general arming of the people,” and “a people’s army with elected officers.”¹⁴ Later Soviet writing does not present all the facts correctly. Having a regular army is now a firm principle of Soviet doctrine, so Lenin and Stalin are presented as having always, from the first days of the Soviet rule, favored a strict regular army.¹⁵ By March, 1919, however, Stalin had reached the opposite conclusion:

The facts show that a voluntary army is unsatisfactory, that our republic cannot be defended by it, unless we form another, a regular, army, steeped in the spirit of discipline, with a well organized political department, which at the first order can stand up and match the enemy.¹⁶

This conclusion arrived at by Stalin is all the more striking since it was his friends (Voroshilov, Budenny, Frunze) who favored the loose “voluntary” discipline and partisan-militia organization. Trotsky, Tukhachevsky, and most of the former Imperial officers favored a regular army with strict discipline. For example, Tukhachevsky (who described the militia as “an antiquated superstition dating from the period of the second international”) explained:

The characteristic features of a militia army are its vast size and comparatively small war efficiency. Large armies which lack the nuclei of permanent military formations can receive no thorough training with regular units in time of peace, since they are assembled only by mobilization orders. Their war efficiency is therefore bound to be small. ... In our case the introduction of the militia system would be tantamount to a crucifixion of Soviet Russia.¹⁷

Tukhachevsky clearly stated his attitude toward the partisans, of the Civil War: “In our [the Civil] war, there is observed a completely incorrect attitude toward the question of partisan war. In the experience of the

Southern, or better the Ukrainian front, we saw how partisan warfare acted in a very decaying [*razlagaiushchyi*] fashion on our regular Red Army.”¹⁸

The compromise adopted after the Civil War was the existence of both a regular army and a territorial militia, with compulsory military service providing recruits for both (the regular army generally being given those with special skills).¹⁹ During the late 1930’s the territorial militia was absorbed into the regular army and by 1939 ceased to exist.

Thus the questions of military command, discipline, and organization were immediately raised, with the Marxian ideology as the alleged reason for reviewing these matters (this was actually the fact, and later the legacy of the Civil War did much to raise and to resolve them). Current military writing in the USSR continues to stress Marxist-Leninist and Soviet (or “Stalinist”) ideas as being the basis for Soviet military theory. It is still reiterated that “Every military theory is a class theory ...”²⁰ and, in Voroshilov’s words: “Only in the USSR, on the bases of a socialist system, on the bases of the dominance of Marxist-Leninist ideology and socialist practice, is genuine military science possible.”²¹

The Imperial Heritage

The influence of Tsarist military thought on Soviet military doctrine, although often concealed, is considerable. The early Bolshevik attitude toward the legacy of Imperial Russia was negative to an extreme, with the important exception of the necessary utilization of large numbers of former Tsarist officers in the Red Army. This, too, was attacked by the Frunze group even in 1918, but Trotsky, who defended this policy as necessary to survival, said:

In order to train the Red Army we are employing some of the better qualified and more honest of the old generals. I hear these questions: “What ... Is this not a dangerous step?” There is danger in everything. We must have teachers who know something about the science of war.²²

This last line indicates the theoretical base of dispute: Was there a military science applicable to all classes or could the new proletarian army evolve a new superior military science and art without the benefit of Imperial

officers? We have previously discussed this debate; here we see that Trotsky's stand on using former Imperial officers, which prevailed, was impelled by his conclusion that there was a military science which the Red Army must master before it could improve. He explained: "We must have an actual armed force built on the basis of military science. Active and systematic participation in all our work of the [ex-Tsarist] military specialists is therefore a matter of vital necessity"²³

This policy of using former Imperial officers as "military specialists" and commanders led to the scheme of "military commissars," reviewed in the previous section. The role of the military specialist commanders was not clear. In 1918, noting its awkwardness, Trotsky attempted to define it:

In purely military, operating, questions, especially in questions of a purely combat character, the military specialists of all offices [ranks; the word rank, *chin*, was in disrepute] have the deciding word. Of course, this type of organization is not ideal. But it has grown from the transitory character of the epoch.²⁴

But Trotsky also agreed that the commissar could interfere in military decisions.

Upon being appointed to command of the First Red Army, former Imperial Lieutenant Mikhail Tukhachevsky called all former officers to the Red colors (on June 2, 1918) with the approval of Trotsky and Lenin.²⁵ This policy was strongly opposed by many, including Stalin. Lenin himself is said to have inquired about the possibility of relieving them all, but Trotsky pointed out the impossibility of doing this with over 30,000 former Imperial officers in the Red Army.²⁶ Official Soviet figures indicate that by April 1, 1919, the Red Army had a total of 216,280 former officers and noncommissioned officers of the Imperial army in its command cadres, including 28,410 former officers and 2919 former military officials.²⁷ Erich Wollenberg stated that in August, 1920, the Red Army had 48,409 former Imperial officers in its command echelons (excluding 14,000 doctors and veterinarians).²⁸ As late as 1928, out of the total of 48,000 officers in the Red Army, 465 were graduates of Imperial higher military academies, and 4418 others had had only prerevolutionary officer training, in addition to the many who had taken further training after the revolution.²⁹ Even more significant than their numbers was their influence and the level of their positions.

The Political Administration conducted an investigation in 1929 to determine the extent of Tsarist influence in terms of leading military personnel of the Red Army at that time. The results were astounding, and the Soviet author could only conclude in perplexity that “the figures do not jibe at all with the fact of the twelve years’ existence of the Red Army.” Out of 243 military men who contributed to military literature in 1929, 198 were found to have been Imperial officers, 94 having been of field grade or general rank in the prerevolutionary army and 29 on the Imperial General Staff. Matters of strategy and tactics, etc., had been studied by over 100 former Tsarist officers and only 21 postrevolutionary writers. Of the authors, 32.1 per cent were party members, but 45 per cent (overlapping the previous figure) were of noble, clerical, or bourgeois origin. Moreover, out of the 100 authors of the 1929 *Field Regulations*, 79 were former Imperial officers.³⁰ In the period from 1929 to 1932, an intensive effort was made to remedy this situation, but without notable success. A Communist Academy was founded to study military affairs from a Marxian viewpoint, and, significantly, it was attached to the Central Committee and not to the General Staff.³¹ Alexander Barmine, who was a general in the Red Army, declared that the influence of Tsarist officers was prominent until 1924 because of Trotsky’s favor, but that his fall meant theirs also, and that by 1927 they no longer had a “cohesive influence.”³² As we have seen above, they did, however, continue to exercise considerable influence after this time, even if they did not represent a clearly defined school of thought. Most of the former Tsarist officers who were influential in shaping Soviet military doctrine came from two groups. There had been a group of Tsarist generals in the higher military academies (especially the Nikolaevsky General Staff Academy) who devoted themselves almost exclusively to research and were sometimes called “the intellectual generals.” Some of these volunteered their services to the Soviet regime and played an important part in the debates of the 1920’s. A few of the more important were Verkhovsky, Neznamov, Svechin, Morozov, Snegarev, and Velichko. The second group were active General Staff colonels and lieutenant colonels including Shaposhnikov, Kamenev (no relation to the Bolshevik leader), Vasetis, Egorov, Kork, and Uborevich. In this group were several of the marshals purged in 1937 (Kork, Uborevich, and Egorov), also Shaposhnikov, the brilliant Soviet Chief of Staff from October, 1941, to November, 1942. Of the field commanders, only three of any importance joined the Red Army: Generals Brusilov, Baranov (of the

Guards), and Nikolaev. Nikolaev was executed upon capture by the Whites in 1919, and Brusilov and Baranov soon faded from an active role. Count Ignat'ev, the Imperial military attache in Paris, also came to the Soviet colors and has had a long but undistinguished career in Soviet military service.

Colonel Sergei S. Kamenev, among the earliest to offer his services to the Red flag, was designated Commander in Chief of the Red Army on June 1, 1919. After the Civil War, he served as Inspector General of the Red Army and as Chief of Staff. He died in 1935. Vasetis became an instructor at the General Staff Academy in 1919; Kork later directed this academy. Svechin, perhaps the most distinguished theorist of the group, became the first Chief of the Soviet All-Russian Supreme Staff (General Staff) and, later, Professor of Military History. Verkhovsky, Neznamov, Snesev, and others also became influential military professors.³³

Most important of all was Boris M. Shaposhnikov, a graduate (1910) of the Nikolaevsky General Staff Academy, a colonel on the Imperial General Staff, and Chief of Staff to Kamenev in 1919-1921. In Barmine's opinion, Shaposhnikov (whom he knew well) should be given the chief credit for shaping the strategy which won both the Civil War and the Second World War for the Soviets.³⁴ At the time of the final campaign against Wrangel, Barmine was a student at the General Staff School, which was limited to regimental and higher commanders. Trotsky, People's Commissar for War, and Kamenev, Commander in Chief, lectured on military strategy. Kamenev, in particular, lectured on war plans and on the strategy of the current campaigns, pointing out the dispositions of troops and objectives and mapping the strategy of the campaign; but all the while, inconspicuously seated on a stool near the lecturer and coaching him on everything, sat his little-known Chief of Staff, Shaposhnikov. Barmine stated that from 1919 until the end of the Civil War Shaposhnikov, in fact, directed the entire Red strategy.

During the interwar period, Shaposhnikov served variously as commander of the Leningrad, Moscow, and Volga Military Districts, as Chief of Staff, and as Director of the Frunze Military Academy (for General Staff officers). He joined the Party in 1930 and suffered only temporary decline in 1931 (following the publication of a book having some favorable mention of Trotsky). He served as Chief of Staff from May, 1937, until August, 1940, and from October, 1941, until November, 1942, when ill-health forced his retirement. He died in 1945 at the age of sixty-three.³⁵

Barmine, as do several other former high Soviet officers, explained the reasons for Shaposhnikov's survival of the military purge in 1937 on the ground that Stalin realized it was essential to retain at least one top strategist, and Shaposhnikov had ideal qualifications. He was probably the most brilliant, the least well known and popular, the least "independent," the least politically inclined, and the most "professional." (He had the added advantage of having disagreed with Trotsky in some Civil War arguments, thus finding himself then in agreement with Stalin.)

Shaposhnikov was a serious student of military affairs and a disciple of Clausewitz. His books *On the Banks of the Vistula* and, especially, *The Brain of the Army*³⁶ are regarded as classics. Many of the leading Soviet strategists and commanders of the recent war and today were pupils of his at the Frunze Academy, notably Marshals Zhukov and Vasilevsky. It is reported that Stalin and Molotov attended his lectures there in the 1930's.

In addition to the important influence of the insinuation into Soviet military doctrine of the ideas of former Imperial officers, Imperial doctrine itself was perpetuated in part by the mere legacy of Tsarist staff and command organization and field regulations.

In 1919, the Central Committee of the Party directed one of its members, Mekhonoshin, to investigate the degree to which the pre-revolutionary military organization and doctrine had continued. It is reported that he told Lenin: "This machine cannot be remolded. It is more likely to change us than be changed by us."³⁷

The 1914 Imperial *Field Regulations* remained in effect until 1925-1929, when the first Soviet *Polevoi Ustav* ("Field Regulations") was prepared. The chief authors of these regulations are almost identical with the list of marshals and chief army commanders purged in 1937—Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevich, Bliikher, Eide-mann, and Primakov. As has been noted, seventy-nine of the one hundred authors of the 1929 *Polevoi Ustav* had formerly been Imperial officers, educated in Imperial doctrine.

Venturing back briefly into Imperialist doctrine, we see that General Dragomirov's influence at the turn of the century began a return to the military thought of earlier Russian strategists and theorists, reversing the trend in Leer's 1881 *Field Regulations*. His ideas were embodied in the 1904 *Field Regulations* and were modified in 1912 and in 1914 (particularly along lines suggested in the Russo-Japanese War). Dragomirov is favorably regarded in Soviet writing since the recent war.

The early Soviet attitude was a strong reaction against conscious influence of, or at least favorable reference to, Imperial doctrine. This was not always a counter-Russian attitude, however. Even though the hated epaulettes *Lpogon*] and stiff uniform were stripped away, leather peaked helmets resembling those of mail used by Alexander Nevsky marked the new Red warriors. As early as 1932, following Stalin's consolidation of power, a return to praise of things Russian began, noticeably increasing in the recent war and culminating in the present frenzy of chauvinism in the creation of Russian authors for so many of the inventions and discoveries of the modern world.

In the military sphere, this has led to a resurrection and exaltation of the great Russian military strategists and thinkers of the past.³⁸ The Soviet eulogy extends from Prince (and Saint) Alexander Nevsky, who is favored as having resisted the West in the 13th century,³⁹ to General Brusilov, who commanded the successful Russian offensive in Galicia in 1916 (and later offered his services to the Bolsheviks).⁴⁰ Four Russian military men are especially extolled for their contributions to military doctrine: Peter the Great, Rumiantsev, Suvorov, and Kutuzov;⁴¹ and so are three Russian naval officers, Admirals Ushakov, Nakhimov, and Makarov. It is claimed, with some justification, that most nineteenth-century Imperial military doctrine "ignored" them and based doctrine on Napoleon, Frederick II, Jomini, Clausewitz, Lloyd, Moltke, and others.⁴²

It is now said that "The foundation of the Russian art of war was laid by Peter the Great," and, specifically, that he placed the proper emphasis on maneuver, offensive strategy, independent cavalry, compulsory military service, and initiative. His modernization of the Russian Army is praised, but its great debt to Prussian drill and regulations is vigorously denied. His military successes against "the West" are probably also an important factor.⁴³

General P. A. Rumiantsev, hero of the Seven Years' War and the Turkish Wars, is favorably regarded historically (chiefly because he was successful).⁴⁴ The Soviets have, in their praise of Rumiantsev, stressed the fact that he replaced Prussian regulations with his own "Russian" version, which corresponded more to Russian habits of drill and combat. Moreover, he was the teacher of Suvorov and a successful general.

General Alexander V. Suvorov, a truly great strategist, is the favorite of the Soviets. He came of humble origin, he was eminently successful, he was in

disfavor with the Tsar (Paul), and certain of his doctrinal points did presage or influence Soviet doctrine. Thus training was stressed: “Hard on training; easy on the battlefield” was one of his maxims.⁴⁵ Anti-Prussian, he nonetheless favored strong discipline and the development of soldierly qualities. He attempted to make heroism a tactical principle, exactly as the Soviets do. He stressed the offensive, activity, and annihilation, as do the Soviets. When discussing his works, the Soviet writer of today praises him in words such as these: “In creating ... our Soviet military science as the science of a new epoch, Lenin and Stalin took all the best that the actions of commanders of the past could offer, developed and enriched it, and together with new forms and modes of conducting battles, operations, and wars as a whole, included it in the Soviet military art.”⁴⁶ Suvorov’s works have recently been reissued, and numerous commentaries have been written praising him and deploring the prerevolutionary stress laid in the Imperial army on Jomini, Clausewitz, and others.⁴⁷

All this illustrates the great changes made since 1921, when Trotsky bitterly told the advocates of the “new, proletarian military doctrine” that their doctrine strongly reminded him of Suvorov’s “Science of Victory”—which it resembled, but which remark was then no compliment.^{48*}

* Lt. General A. A. Vlasov, later the leader of the German-sponsored anti-Soviet “Russian Liberation Army,” is credited by his followers with having urged the Soviet General Staff, in December, 1940, to rear the Soviet soldier “in the Suvorov way.” (See G. Fischer, “General Vlasov’s Official Biography,” *Russian Review*, Vol. 8, No. 4, October, 1949, p. 297.)

General Mikhail I. Kutuzov, a talented follower of Suvorov’s, was already retired in 1812. In the early phase of the Napoleonic invasion, the command of the armies had been entrusted to the younger Barclay de Tolly (whose family had come to Russia from Scotland 150 years before). De Tolly carried out the proper strategy of defense in depth by retreating; but after losing the engagement of Smolensk he was replaced by Kutuzov, who continued his plan of retreat (losing, tactically, the battle of Borodino, much as de Tolly had lost Smolensk). The success of this policy of retreat, scorched earth, evacuation of Moscow, and harassment led to Napoleon’s inglorious retreat, pursued constantly by Kutuzov.

Engels adjudged de Tolly to be the greater commander in this campaign (both he and Kutuzov followed the same basic strategy, although Kutuzov put more stress on activeness of defense, whereas de Tolly was more “Fabian”).

Stalin, however, specifically “overrode” Engels on this point in 1947, when he wrote:

Engels spoke as though General Barclay de Tolly was the only strategist of the Russian commanders of the period of 1812 who merits attention. Engels, of course, was mistaken, since Kutuzov as a strategist was indisputably two heads taller than Barclay de Tolly. But in our time one can still find people who foam at the mouth defending this mistaken expression of Engels.⁴⁹

The Soviet military press has, of course, repeated this and increased its praise of Kutuzov.⁵⁰

Kutuzov was favored over de Tolly for the reasons indicated: because he was a “pure Russian,” and because it was he who was finally victorious. He influenced or at least presaged Soviet doctrine in many respects, such as active defense by retreat in depth, aiming only at the possible, flank attacks, parallel pursuit of the retreating foe, and stress on maneuver.

Three Russian admirals are praised in Soviet discussions of naval doctrine: Admiral Ushakov, who is credited with being the originator of ideas “stolen” by Admiral Nelson;⁵¹ Admiral Pavel Nakhimov, the victor at Sinope in 1853;⁵² and Vice-Admiral Makarov (of the late nineteenth century). These three are credited with laying the basis for current Soviet naval doctrine, which benefits of course from the “great advances beyond their ideas” of Stalinist naval science.⁵³

Former Tsarist military theoreticians and historians did thus influence Soviet doctrine by conveying along with their own ideas much which originated with earlier Russian strategists.

In addition, we might mention the influence of White strategists on the thinking of Bolshevik military leaders during the Civil War. The principle of unity of strategic plan and command was surely re-emphasized by the fact of its omission on the White side, which fact was probably more important than any other single factor in the ultimate White failure. Similarly, in some cases, the White political error of unpopular attempts to return to the old status quo in regard to land reform pointed out the importance of maintaining a secure rear. On the positive side, such tactical principles as those reflected in General Mamontov’s cavalry raid of 1918 surely influenced the Bolsheviks; Stalin’s “brilliant innovation” of “the first cavalry army” in 1919 was a direct copy of this successful White operation. Other less dramatic examples abound.

Foreign Influences

An important avenue for the entrance of non-Russian military thought into Soviet doctrine was the Imperial heritage. It is impossible to delineate accurately its direct influence except in isolated instances. However, some of the basic ideas of non-Russian military theoreticians seem to have been introduced into Soviet military doctrine during its earliest and most plastic period of development, in the 1920's.

We have previously noted the continuing role of many Tsarist officers in the Red Army. Of them, we will mention here only the most probable carriers of specific doctrines; all, of course, were brought up on Imperial military doctrine, which included non-Russian influences, and many of the officers had experienced several phases of development in Imperial doctrine. A number of "the intellectual generals" had been brought up during the period of Leer's influence in the 1880's, and even more had been brought up under Drago-mirov in the decade of the turn of the century and subsequently during the influence of changes prompted by the Russo-Japanese War and the alliance with France. General Dragomirov, who was largely responsible for the 1904 *Field Regulations*, attempted to lay the bases for officers' training on intellectual lines; he was a conscious disciple of Jomini.⁵⁴

Jomini himself had left Napoleon's service in 1813 and under the customs of the age was accepted into the service of the Tsar Alexander I; he remained, technically, in the Russian service until his death in 1869. Jomini stressed the need to maneuver one's major forces, the quantitative mass, so that they are brought to bear on the decisive area of the battlefield. He stressed the "strategical initiative," and hence a preference for the offensive, and, unlike Clausewitz, his goal was more the domination of decisive "zones of operation" than the neutralization of the army of the foe. As we shall see, many of these ideas also characterize current Soviet doctrine. Concentration of forces in the decisive direction, maneuver to maintain strategic initiative, and an offensive preference all characterize Soviet doctrine. These may be coincidental, and Soviet denial of all foreign influences obscures the issue greatly; but occasionally even explicit reference can be found. Thus, Major General Galatinov has quoted Jomini that "it is necessary to deal one's blow in the most decisive direction."⁵⁵ A writer in *Bol'shevik* in 1938 has also given Jomini credit for showing the advantage of the strategic counter-

offensive,⁵⁶ later one of Stalin's most vaunted contributions to military science. Although Clausewitz rather than Jomini is followed on the mission of battle for the army, in Soviet naval doctrine domination of the "zone of operations" is stated to be the mission (even using Jomini's phrase, but without explicit reference to him). As we have seen, Jomini's search for explicit principles of war is not found in Soviet doctrine.

The ideas of Clausewitz were the most important foreign influence. Clausewitz himself had served in the Russian army, as a colonel on liaison with the Prussian command, from 1811 to 1815; but his influence on Imperial thought came later, as elsewhere, with the posthumous publication of his famous work *On War Worn Kriege* in 1827. In tracing his influence on Soviet doctrine through Imperial military thought, conclusive evaluations are difficult. It is, nonetheless, very likely that Shaposhnikov, who was a very careful student of Clausewitz' works, introduced much of his thought into Soviet doctrine and into the thinking of many of the leading Soviet marshals of today. Shaposhnikov's work on *The Brain of the Army* (the General Staff) shows his indebtedness to and respect for Clausewitz. Two of the three volumes open with quotations from Clausewitz' writings. Shaposhnikov himself spoke of Clausewitz as "that great philosopher of war."⁵⁷ Barmine and other former high Soviet officers attest that in the 1930's Clausewitz' *On War* was being taught.

In addition to Clausewitz' influence through Imperial doctrine and officers, at least as important a channel was the strong influence his work had on Marx, Engels, and Lenin.⁵⁸ Marx and Engels read, and admittedly were impressed by, Clausewitz' works; and after them Lenin read most of *On War* in 1915. Trotsky also quoted Clause-witz on occasion. The date of Stalin's introduction to his work is not known, but Molotov served on the editorial committee which printed Lenin's annotations to Clausewitz in 1931 and presumably read the work then. We have noted that in the 1930's both Molotov and Stalin reportedly attended Shaposhnikov's lectures at the Frunze Academy, which doubtless stressed Clausewitz' ideas.

When Lenin read *On War* (in German, in 1915), it was the incomplete manuscript of July, 1827. Precisely how much was available to him is not certain, but his annotations are found to parts of twenty-three chapters. Lenin's marginal comments were first published in *Pravda* in 1923, again in *Pravda* in 1930, and (for the last time) in *Lentnsk'ti Sbornik* in 1931.⁵⁹

Lenin's general comments and impressions were decidedly favorable and showed his great interest in the work. His chief interest, as reflected in his marginal comments and underscoring, was more in military philosophy than in the art of war itself.

Clausewitz' concern with the close relation of politics and war was of particular interest, since this is a part also of the Bolshevik doctrine. Where Clausewitz wrote that "in one kind of war policy seems entirely to disappear, while in another it very definitely comes to the front, we can nevertheless maintain that one kind is as political as the other," Lenin wrote: "N.B.: Seeming is not yet actuality. War seems *more* 'military' when it is more deeply political...." Lenin also underlined Clausewitz' many references to the effect that "war is a mere continuation of policy by other means" and the section heading "War as an Instrument of Policy," Lenin commenting that this was "the most important chapter." Lenin underscored heavily Clausewitz' famous passage on the continuation of political relations in war, where he remarks that war "has, to be sure, its own grammar, but not its own logic."* He marginally commented, "War is a part of the whole; that whole is politics."†

* Stalin later made the following comment: "The terminology of Clausewitz concerning a grammar and logic of war grates on one's ears." (See *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1947, p. 8.)

† As with the German and French equivalents, the Russian term *politika* may mean either "politics" or "policy."

Lenin later referred to Clausewitz frequently, repeating his dictum that war is the continuation of politics by other means. These references are quite complimentary to Clausewitz. In *Socialism and War* (1915), he wrote:

War is the continuation of politics by other (namely violent) means. That well-known quotation belongs to one of the deepest writers on military affairs, Clausewitz. Marxists justly have always considered that thesis the theoretical basis of views on the significance of any given war. Marx and Engels always looked at different wars especially from that point of view.⁶⁰

On another occasion (in 1917), Lenin termed Clausewitz "one of the most noted writers on the philosophy of wars and on the history of wars ... a writer, whose basic thoughts have at present become the indisputable acquisitions of every thinking person...."⁶¹ Engels described Clausewitz once as "a star of the first magnitude."⁶² This evaluation of Clausewitz was radically revised by Stalin in a letter written in February, 1946, and

published one year later in *Bol'shevik*, the chief theoretical journal of the Party.⁶³ In answer to the question, "Have Lenin's theses in evaluation of Clausewitz become obsolete?" Stalin wrote:

With such a formulation of the question one may think that Lenin analyzed the military doctrine and military works of Clause-witz, gave them a military appraisal, and left us as heritage a series of guiding theses [*polozheni*] on the military question, which we must take for our text.

Such a statement of the question is incorrect, since in actual fact no such "theses" of Lenin on the military doctrine of Clausewitz and his works exist ... in his reviews of Clausewitz and comments on Clausewitz' book, Lenin did not broach purely military questions of the nature of questions on the military strategy and tactics and their interrelations.... He praised Clausewitz above all for the fact that the non-Marxist Clausewitz, who enjoyed in his time [*sic*] the authority of an expert on military affairs, supported in his works the well-known Marxist thesis of the fact that there exists a direct connection between war and politics, that politics begets war, that war is a continuation of politics by violent means.⁶⁴

Stalin thus affirmed the idea of war as the continuation of politics. He also mentioned, correctly, Lenin's interest (and his own) in Clausewitz' ideas "on the interrelationship between attack and retreat," "defense and the counteroffensive," and "retreat under certain adverse conditions"; but he further stated flatly that Clausewitz "has become obsolete as a military authority," and that "it is ridiculous to take lessons from Clausewitz now."

This repudiation of Clausewitz as a military analyst is not significant as an indication of Soviet military doctrine, because many of his ideas remain as part of "Stalinist military science." This is significant as an outstanding example of the process of Stalinism, seen in all phases of Soviet life, of the repudiation of any "foreign influence" on Soviet doctrine or achievement.* In 1937, an editorial in *Pravda* still declared, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Red Army:

We have never considered it beneath us to learn the art of war from our enemies. In our military schools we study Clausewitz, Moltke, Schlieffen and Ludendorff. We have worked hard and zealously, and in some respects we think we have outdistanced our "teachers."⁶⁵

Even in 1939 Voroshilov quoted from Clausewitz, whom he then called "the classical military thinker and writer of the 19th century";⁶⁶ by 1947 this was impossible.⁶⁷

* A former Soviet colonel interviewed by this author disclosed the fact that Clause-witz was very popular among officers before the war and was the most-read foreign military authority. This popularity

and the regard in which Clausewitz was held doubtless contributed to Stalin's determination to destroy the reputation of this alien source.

Several influences from Germany affected Soviet doctrine in the interwar period. First, and most important, was the contact of Soviet and German officers in the course of secret military collaboration conducted from 1922 until 1933.⁶⁸ It is not clear to what extent this affected Soviet military doctrine. Most of this cooperation was technical, especially that concerning aircraft production and chemical development, and the exchange permitted Germany to evade the limiting provisions of the Versailles Treaty by constructing aircraft production facilities in Soviet Russia (notably Junkers-Werke, Dornier, and Fokker), a percentage of the aircraft produced going to the Soviet Union. Similar arrangements concerned chemical and poison-gas production and development.⁶⁹ But the main influence on doctrine was in the training of high Soviet officers. As many as one hundred annually, including most notably Zhukov, studied in Berlin in the 1920's.⁷⁰

Several former Soviet officers, including two of field grade, interviewed by this author stated that German military doctrine was that most studied prior to the recent war because of its kinship in offensive stress and because Germany seemed to be a possible enemy.*

* Japanese military doctrine was similarly studied in the autonomous Far Eastern Red Banner Army. The U.S. Army regulations and doctrine are frequently the subject of postwar discussion in the Soviet military press.

Another influence from Germany was the introduction, perhaps through the channel described above, of the ideas of Haushofer's *Geopolitik*. Barmine declared that his ideas were studied by the Soviet leaders, and, from the late 1920's until the present day, form the basis of Soviet political strategy. He stated that when he studied in the Frunze Academy in 1934, Haushofer's work had been translated and was taught "just like Clausewitz" with no attempt to conceal the foreign origin of the ideas.⁷¹ While the favorable implications of geopolitics are doubtless not overlooked by the Soviets, it seems unlikely that the influence of Haushofer's ideas is as basic and exclusive as Barmine suggested.[†] At any rate, Haushofer is now strongly criticized as being an inferior German military ideologue.⁷²

[†] A number of former Soviet officers interviewed by this author, including one colonel, either denied such influence or had never heard of Haushofer. This, of course, does not in itself contradict Barmine's thesis that in the top leadership geopolitics assumes an important role in strategic thinking, but it seriously qualifies his contention that Haushofer was taught at the General Staff (Frunze Academy) level; by the immediate prewar period, his ideas were not taught there.

Of recent foreign military writers, two, in the prewar period, were particularly noted and read, although both were soundly criticized as being too extreme. These two were Fuller and Douhet. For some reason, Fuller's theory of tank warfare was chosen for discussion instead of similar writings by Hart, De Gaulle, and Guderian (all known to the Soviets). Similarly, Douhet's *Command of the Air* was selected as being the most authoritative Western statement of airpower advocacy. Both were carefully studied in the appropriate higher academies, but both were strongly criticized as paying excessive attention to one arm of troops.

Current Development of Soviet Military Doctrine

We have considered in general terms the background influences on Soviet military doctrine as a whole, and the Soviet conceptions of military doctrine, military science and art, and strategy and tactics. Before continuing with an analysis of the principles comprising Soviet military doctrine, further illumination of the process of its formulation and adoption, implicit as well as explicit, is desirable.

Soviet military thought, as well as other forms of creative endeavor, has been subjected, as we have noted, to the misfortune of having to ride the turbulent sea of fluctuating internal Soviet political currents, and, following its relative calming, of having to submit to the increasingly tightened controls over thought. The tacit ban on revising or extending Stalin's "permanently operating factors" is a case directly in point.

The experience of past wars, especially the most recent, is necessarily a major influence in defining the military doctrine of a state. Peacetime technological developments and modifications, although sometimes radical, are nonetheless alterations in a pattern fashioned by the experience of war. Soviet principles are no exception; the two decades following 1921 were consciously based in a large degree on the Civil War. The Great Fatherland War of 1941-1945 has formed a new layer superimposed upon the older one, but the changes are partial; and although the recent regulations differ from those of the prewar period, the differences are specific, not total. The Soviets often state that

It is necessary to be able to draw lessons from every battle, making useful practical conclusions.... The experience of wars, mastering a deep and many sided analysis of it, is the basic link in the whole chain of raising the military mastery of our generals, officers, and soldiers.⁷³

More particularly, as Major General Talensky, of the General Staff, stated, "The combat experience of the Red Army is and will be in the future the fundamental and decisive factor which determines the development of peacetime military art for many decades."⁷⁴ Since the time of this statement, Stalin himself decreed that "the entire training of the Army is to be based on the skillful use of experience of the war. This experience should also be thoroughly utilized for the theoretical education of officers."⁷⁵

During the war, Front Headquarters (Army Group GHQ) had staff sections of their own who were studying recent operations of the war, in addition to the studies being conducted continuously by the Frunze Academy, the Voroshilov General Staff Academy, and other higher military schools. The writer interviewed a former captain who served in this function on Marshal Timoshenko's Northwest Front Headquarters in 1942-1943. The task was not a study of all the Front operations to date, but of the "errors," that is, unsuccessful operations, of the Soviet formations. Doctrine was assumed to be correct until proven in error (i.e., unsuccessful in combat), and this seemed to be the main basis for developing tentative changes in it. Observations of German doctrine in operation and the reasons for its success were not studied thoroughly (although they exerted considerable tactical influence). The situation was frequently much less conducive to productive development of doctrine. As one source stated:

In the Frunze Academy where I served as an instructor we collected war studies as rapidly as possible and endeavored to draw from them all possible lessons which might be made applicable to current training. Frequently it was difficult to perform honest work because the Party line tended to draw lessons only from the Red victories, often neglecting the wealth of important material contained in those accounts which dealt with Soviet defeats. The development of new doctrine seems to be lagging, in spite of the fact that Stalin correctly has stated that the art of war makes rapid and continuous progress, and that fixed doctrine therefore is not sound. The tendency to praise the battles of the local general discourages advancement of new ideas, in spite of the Generalissimo's statement.⁷⁶

Public Soviet statements omit all discussion of failings or defeats. The only references suggesting that Soviet military doctrine has not always been perfect are statements of its continually increasing perfection. Thus

Voroshilov discusses four periods of the recent war, “each of which reflects its originality and the unfaltering progress of the development of Stalinist military art.”⁷⁷

In the West, the official service and general military schools are the principal source of development of military doctrine; in the Soviet Union, this is less true. They do play such a role, especially the Frunze and Voroshilov Academies, but there are several other principal sources.

As in the West, the military periodicals assist in developing doctrine.* In the Soviet Union they are all official, of course, but new and different ideas, on a tactical level, are occasionally aired. In all such cases, the editors explicitly state that the article is being presented “by way of discussion.” The most important of these is the theoretical journal *Military Thought* [*Voennaia Mysl*’], published by the Historical Administration of the General Staff. Many of the articles in it are the product of research by officer-students at the Voroshilov Academy. Major General Nikolai Talensky is the chief editor, and most of his colleagues on the editorial board are also members of the Historical Administration of the General Staff.† Labeled “For Generals, Admirals, and Officers of the Soviet Army and Navy Only,” its circulation is very restricted.

* See the Bibliography, pp. 508-509, for a list of Soviet military periodicals, with a brief commentary on each.

† In addition to Talensky, they are Lt. Gen. E. A. Shilovsky, Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin, Maj. Gen. P. D. Korkodinov, and Col. V. V. Voronin. The other editors are Col. Gen. of Artillery F. A. Samsonov, Lt. Gen. (?) of Aviation P. P. Ionov, and M. F. Panfilov (rank unknown).

The Historical Administration of the General Staff plays a far more active and important role in the formulation of doctrine than do its Western counterparts.‡ Its influence, through classified reports, the periodical *Military Thought*, and occasional published books, may be the primary determinant in developing operational doctrine. This follows from the previously noted explicit stress on study of the most recent war and the learning of its lessons. The names of outstanding members (such as Major General Zamiatin, Major General Talensky, and Lt. General Shilovsky) appear often as sources in this study.*

‡ This is more in the German tradition, following Schlieffen and Moltke, than in that of other countries. The Soviets have extended this even farther than did the Germans.

* In addition to the members previously noted who were also editors of *Voennaia Mysl'*, Marshal of the Soviet Union Shaposhnikov, both prior to and following (until his death) his last term as Chief of Staff (July, 1941—November, 1942), headed the Historical Administration. Other members of the Historical Administration identified by this author are Col. A. V. Vasiliev, Col. F. D. Vorob'ev, Col. Korotkov, Col. P. S. Boldirev, Col. M. V. Savin, Lt. Col. V. I. Sidorov, Lt. Col. Porodkin, Lt. Col. N. V. Artemov, and Lt. Col. I. V. Parotkin.

The Voroshilov Academy (corresponding to the U.S. National War College) and the Frunze Academy (comparable to the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth) are closely connected with the Historical Administration and assist in developing doctrine.[†]

[†] In the 1930's the Frunze Academy was the only General Staff college. Until his recent death Col. Gen. Tsvetaev was its commandant. Army Gen. M. V. Zakharov commands the Voroshilov Academy.

The *Field Regulations* [*Polevoi Ustav*] and *Combat Regulations* [*Boevoi Ustav*] of each arm are the basic conveyors of Soviet military doctrine. The 1936 *Provisional Field Regulations*, revised in the 1940 *Field Regulations*, represented prewar Soviet military doctrine. The 1942 through 1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* and the 1944 *Field Regulations* incorporate changes brought about by the war in a number of important specific respects, but in general doctrine has remained the same.⁷⁸ In all cases of known change in doctrine, this fact is explicitly stated, so that prewar or wartime sources in this study represent, so far as we are able to know, current ideas, except changes caused by postwar technological development, which are noted at the appropriate places.

In 1949, a special “Bureau for the Study of Modern Warfare” is reported to have been established directly under the Chief of Staff, Army General Shtemenko.⁷⁹ This bureau is composed of about one hundred officers selected for their outstanding abilities. It is probably closely tied, in personnel and program, with the Historical Administration of the General Staff.

These, in general, are the agencies of the Soviet armed forces concerned with the elaboration and development of military doctrine.

PART II

SOVIET PRINCIPLES OF WAR

An analysis of the primary Soviet principles guiding the conduct of war, with critical discussion of their nature and investigation of their doctrinal roles.

CHAPTER 4

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE

OFFENSIVE, AND DEFENSE

Soviet military doctrine stresses the principle of offensive action. Prior to the recent war, this tendency was so pronounced that defensive doctrine was inadequately instilled in the army, and it was necessary to teach and partially to recreate defensive doctrine during an extremely costly retreat.

The Marxian Legacy

The Marxian idea of world revolution of the exploited proletariat caused the early Bolshevik leaders to be unduly optimistic in their expectations of other revolutions paralleling their own in the period immediately following the October Revolution. The failures in Hungary (1919) and Germany (1919 and 1923) persuaded the Politburo that these expectations had been premature and must be deferred indefinitely. But from 1918 to 1923 this matter was not so clearly resolved, and necessarily military doctrine was involved. Those who were more sanguine about prospects abroad, notably Trotsky, were not always those who stressed the offensive principle in military doctrine. But the advocates of a new proletarian doctrine, led by Frunze, Gusev, and Voroshilov, did stress the offensive as a peculiarly proletarian principle. Tukhachevsky, who strongly opposed the latter group on most points, held fully the same view on this matter. Frunze, in his arguments, stated that Marx had often declared that attack was the best form of defense, and from this he argued that the Red Army must be guided solely by an offensive principle. He said:

The tactics of the Red Army were and will be impregnated with activity in the spirit of bold and energetically conducted offensive operations. This flows from the class nature of the workers' and peasants' army and at the same time coincides with the requirements of military art.¹

One reason for Soviet preference for the offensive is the “activity” which characterizes the offense. As Frunze stated on another occasion: “The victor will be the one who finds in himself the determination to attack; the side which will only defend itself is doomed to defeat.... Hence the necessity to bring up our army in the spirit of the greatest activity.”² This emphasis on the offensive as “determination” had been clearly stated by Lenin before the Revolution:

Once the insurrection is begun, it is necessary to act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, to take *the offensive*. “The defensive is the death of an armed uprising.”³

As we shall see later, when it is necessary to assume the defensive, similar stress is placed on determination and activeness.

In urging the principle of the offensive as a major component of the new “proletarian” military doctrine which they sought, Frunze, Gusev, and others were inspired primarily by thoughts of world revolution aided by offensive action of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army (its full title until 1939). In this expectation of the early 1920’s they were joined by virtually all the early Soviet leaders, but many of these champions of world revolution, notably Trotsky, argued strongly against any unique “proletarian principle of the offensive.”

Tukhachevsky held a strong predilection for offensive action. He distinguished between national (international) and class or civil wars. “Civil war,” he said, “by its very essence demands decisive, bold offensive actions.”⁴ Moreover, he wanted the Red Army to be prepared for its offensive role in the approaching world revolution. As he wrote to Zinoviev, then head of the Comintern: “The Communist International must prepare for the coming civil war from a military point of view, for the moment of the world wide attack by all the armed forces of the proletariat [i.e., the Red Army plus indigenous uprisings] on world-wide armed capitalism.”⁵ Against such formidable and ideologically inspired opposition, the few former Imperial officers who argued, on strictly military grounds, for a defensive orientation could make only a weak stand. However, Svechin and Verkovsky, the latter even advocating retreat as preferable to advance in case of war, continued to teach their ideas until 1931, when they were castigated as “bourgeois theoreticians.”

Offensive Primacy

Soviet military regulations consistently declare that “Offensive combat is the basic aspect of actions by the Red Army.”⁶ And as the 1936 *Field Regulations*

stated:

Every war, offensive and defensive, has the aim of defeating the enemy. But *only a decisive offensive in the main direction*, concluding with persistent pursuit, leads to a complete annihilation of the forces and means of the enemy.⁷

Not until 1942 was defense explicitly admitted to be “a normal form of combat.” The 1942 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated:

Offensive combat is the fundamental aspect of combat actions of the Red Army, but along with this the regulations consider defense also as a normal aspect of combat in contemporary war.⁸

Failure to recognize, prior to the recent war, the full nature of defense probably contributed to the excessive concentration of Soviet forces close to the frontier. Due to this concentration, the Germans almost succeeded in their plan of penetrating the entire depth of defense, encircling the Red Army in large groups and destroying them in detail. Soviet doctrine continues to stress the role of the offensive; and Soviet military literature continues to emphasize offensive combat.

Defensive doctrine has never been totally lacking, nor basically unsound, but it has not received adequate consideration in training, partly because of the less favorable political and morale implications. The prewar annual training schedules, which specified in some detail the content of troop instruction and practice, were almost always offensive.⁹

The Soviet attitude toward the defense as being merely “static” and “passive” is contrasted with the attitude toward the offensive, with its accent on the Bolshevik virtues of “activity,” “advance,” and the “initiative.”¹⁰ This strong preference for activity and the offensive is probably in part an (unrecognized) psychologically defensive manifestation induced by fear; by analogy, we commonly speak of persons with an inferiority complex who, defensively, become very offensive in their outward orientation; such a person is sometimes said to “carry a chip on his shoulder,” and he provokes others, aping his image of them in order to ward off the feared conduct (which he himself then displays). This preference is combined with and influences military considerations, and in its operational manifestations is transformed into military actions. Confirmation of the psycho-ideological component of this attitude must be inferred from the entire complex of evidence, of which an excessive preference for the offensive is but one instance. This is not contradictory to the statement that the offensive is stressed because of the “dynamics” of a revolutionary-expansionist ideology, but merely supplements it and may, perhaps, throw some light on the psychological support of this ideology. The ideology, in turn, is taken to be Soviet Communism (or Stalinism, in recent decades), blending both Marxism and its class struggle with Leninist Bolshevism

and its professional and total dedication in a closely knit organizational instrument. While unjustified, the Soviet fear of Western aggression is probably really felt to a considerable degree and is perpetuated by necessary Western reactions to Soviet policies.

As we shall see later, the offensive is not taken blindly, but on the basis of supposedly realistic calculations of the degree of “potentiality” which can be “utilized” by advance (to use the Bolshevik jargon). This includes careful calculation of the necessary measures for consolidation and of the relation vis-a-vis the enemy.

The Offensive

Soviet military doctrine explicitly designates the infantry offensive as being basic, supplemented by a closely coordinated use of all other types of troops. During the war, the “artillery offensive” and the “air offensive” (explicitly) and the “tank offensive” (implicitly) were introduced into Soviet military doctrine, but still as special forms of support. The 1942–1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated:

The regulations introduce new conceptions: *the artillery offensive* and *the aviation offensive* with the aim of constant support to the infantry by massed, active fire of artillery, mortars and aviation in the entire course of the period of the offensive.^{[11](#)}

The offensive comprises a simultaneous attack on the entire depth of the enemy defense in the initial assault with infantry, tank, artillery, and air forces in extending range. As one Soviet manual has stated:

Offensive battle is conducted by decisive movement forward of the entire combat formation, and consists of suppressing the enemy by all the might of fire, attack on the combat formation of the army with all the force of the blow, overcoming his disposition in his entire depth, and annihilating him on the field of battle.^{[12](#)}

This has remained the postwar Soviet doctrine. Lt. General Burshty-novich quoted the regulations in 1947 as stating: “Offensive combat consists in suppressing the enemy by mighty fire of all means, and a blow in his entire depth of defense, and is conducted by a decisive offensive of the entire combat order.”^{[13](#)}

In a major Soviet offensive operation, several Fronts (Army Groups) are usually coordinated in a single operation (frequently with the aim of encircling the foe). Preparations are extensive, customarily requiring two months for those for a major offensive after the completion of a previous move. Assembly of troops takes place about 40 miles to the rear, concentrations then moving up shortly before the

launching of the assault. The frontage of a rifle division is usually from 1 to 2 miles. Soviet prewar doctrine regarding the necessary superiority of forces over those of the defending enemy, not basically changed since the war, calls for a superiority of four to six to the enemy's one.¹⁴

The offensive is considered to consist of four main phases:

Preparation

The assault

Securing the offensive

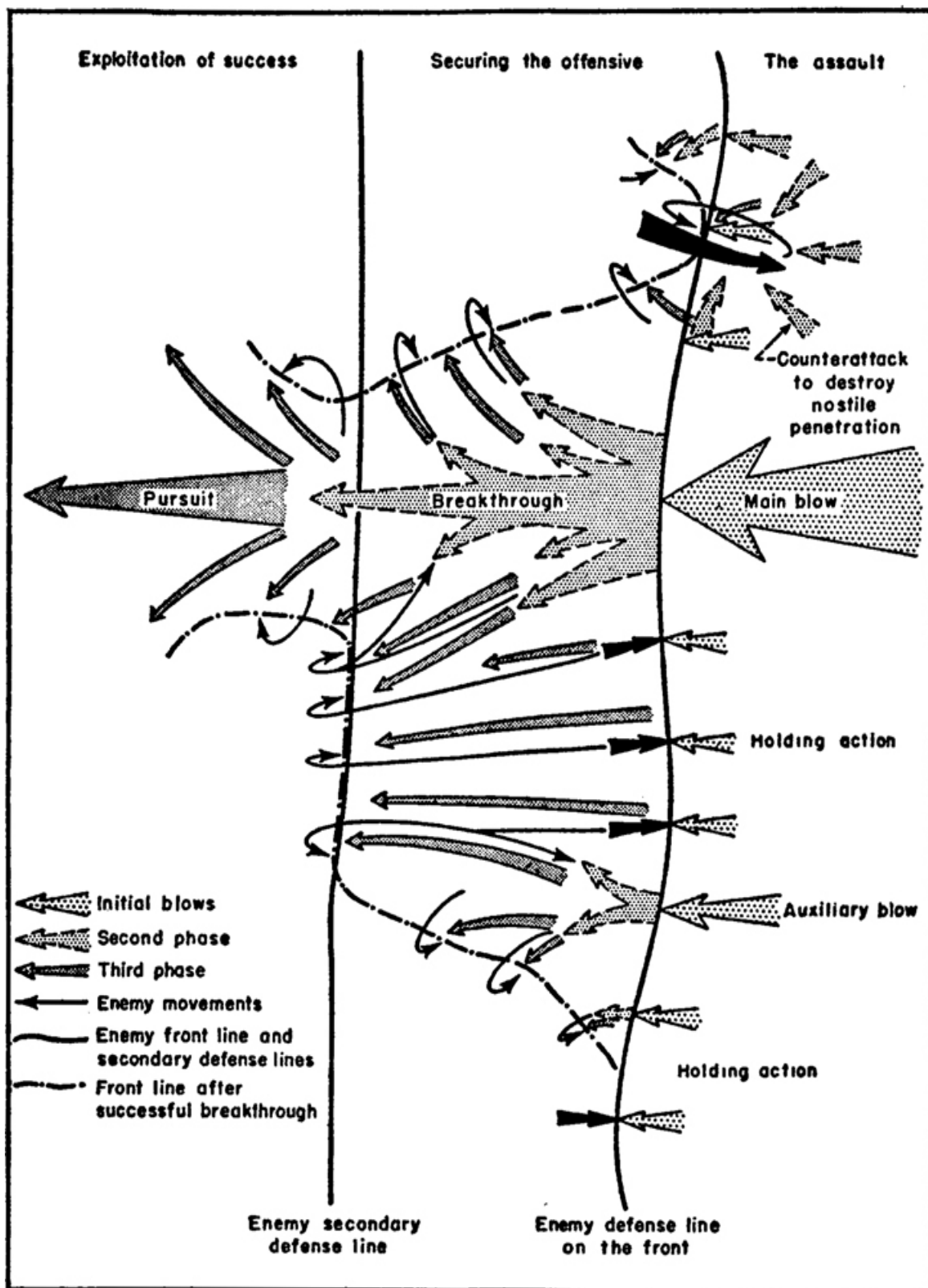
Exploitation of success

The "artillery offensive" includes not only the preparation phase, in which it is of primary importance (together with air attack), but *all* phases, shifting its fire with the advance of infantry and tank forces. Similarly, the "air offensive" acts as long-range artillery and, beginning with targets directly beyond effective artillery range, moves its fire forward as the artillery shifts its fire and advances. The preparation phase is from half an hour to 6 hours in duration.¹⁵

The assault is conducted by the infantry in conjunction with tanks (including "tank-borne" infantry and self-propelled guns). Great superiority is concentrated in a "main blow" in "the decisive direction." The emphasis is on momentum by mass, and, if not easily neutralized, hostile strong points are by-passed, and subsequent echelons passing through consolidate the gains of the first echelon. The securement phase consists largely in the meeting of enemy counterattacks (usually tank), the overcoming of secondary hostile defense lines, and systematic consolidation after total annihilation of remnants of the enemy force. The exploitation of success is a continuation of momentum in the advance by deep penetration, pursuit, and, wherever possible, envelopment and encirclement, with subsequent annihilation in detail.

Of great importance is the scale of a modern offensive operation. In 1946, Colonel Pavlenko defined the scale of an offensive operation in terms of two dimensions: the "width of the front" and the "depth of development." He noted that development between the two world wars led to a significant increase in operating distance, firepower, and mobility.¹⁶ He enumerated the basic factors on which the scale of offensive operations depends:

1. The method of organization of offensive operations;
2. The qualitative and quantitative superiority of the offense over the defense in all phases of the operation (in which it is especially



[Diagram of the Offensive in Soviet Doctrine](#)

important to have in the operational structure of the offense mighty mobile formations);

3. The decisive defeat of large groupings of the enemy;
4. The effectiveness of the preliminary blow;
5. The tempo of development of the operation;
6. The maximum abridgment of operative pauses;
7. The mobility of the rear (the degree of its motorization, the tempo of establishment of railroads).¹⁷

He listed as additional basic factors the strength, depth, and character of the enemy's defense; the preparation and endurance of his troops; the terrain; and the time of year and weather conditions.

Meeting engagements, although recognized as a special form of warfare, are also considered as being a special form of offensive warfare because of the Soviet stress on gaining the initiative and using it offensively up to the annihilation of the foe.¹⁸

The Relation of Forces: Determination of Offense or Defense

The criterion for determining offense or defense as being the strategy for any given situation (and no situation is viewed as being static) is a calculation of the relation of forces between the opponents. In case of a favorable relation of forces, one in which the Soviets have the capability for effective advance, the offensive is mandatory, with the only reservation that this be viewed strategically; we have already noted Stalin's statement that sometimes potential tactical gains must not be realized because they are strategically not advisable.

The "relation of forces" [*sootnoshenze sil*] is the over-all estimate of the situation, the balance of relative capabilities, and inclines to the favor of the winning opponent. As one manual has stated: "In the course of battle the relation of forces of the offense and defense constantly changes as a result of the contending fire, and the introduction of fresh forces into the battle."¹⁹ Hence, in cases in which an initial adverse relation of forces requires adoption of the defensive, as in 1941-1942, the offensive cannot be launched "until that stage where the relation of forces, unfavorable for the defense at the outset of the attack, changes the course of battle."²⁰

Major General Talensky, of the General Staff, explained this explicitly in an extended analysis in 1946:

In strategic defense one of the combatants, as a rule, faces an unfavorable relation of forces. This unfavorable relation of forces, which is defined now not only by the relation of manpower of the sides, but also the quantity and quality of combat technology....

The fundamental aim of strategic defense in this situation consists of securing the conditions for an alteration of the relation of forces to the advantage of the combatant, to prepare the necessary prerequisites for the transition of offensive action, for the seizure of the strategic initiative.²¹

The early alterations in the relation of forces were the operations at Moscow, Tikhvin, and Rostov in 1941 and at Voronezh in 1942. The battle of Stalingrad was the decisive alteration, followed by Kursk-Orel in 1943.²²

On the tactical level, the relation of forces in being is considered to be calculable on a numerical-ratio basis. Thus, in *General Tactics* it is stated: "The necessary *relation of forces* between the offense and defense in the direction of the main blow can be defined by the following orientation calculation...."²³ The ratio of four or five battalions to each enemy battalion is then given as the necessary relation for an attack.

The relation of forces, or balance of relative capabilities, is considered to be the objective determiner of offense or defense (and of advance or retreat) and yet to be alterable by either side. Both opponents are continually rising or falling in relation to one another, due to qualitative and quantitative changes in men, materiel, plans, etc. The relation of forces is the calculated relative balance between opponents at any moment of estimation.

The Role and Nature of Defense

Despite the preference for an offensive strategy, the Soviets fully recognize, in an unfavorable relation of forces, the need for defense. Thus, "Defense is adopted in those cases where an offensive is impossible or inexpedient under the circumstances."²⁴

The mission of defense in Soviet doctrine was fully developed in the 1936 *Field Regulations* and has been repeated often since then.* The Soviet officer is taught that

Defense is employed with the aim:

- (a) of economy of forces on a wide front for the blow in the decisive direction;
- (b) of gaining time for the creation of the necessary grouping of forces for the offensive;

- (c) of gaining time in secondary directions until the results of the offensive in the decisive direction;
- (d) of holding space (regions, borders and roads);
- (e) of the disorganization of the attacking enemy for the consequent transition to the offensive.²⁵

Further, it is even declared that “Defense, united with offensive actions or with a following transition to the offensive, especially on the flank of a weakened enemy, can lead to complete defeat.”²⁶ But all Soviet regulations stress the necessity for the later transition to the decisive (counter) offensive—“only the consequent transition to the decisive offensive can lead to the destruction of the foe.”²⁷

* Soviet doctrine on defense is very similar to United States doctrine. The 1944 *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, state that “The defense is conducted along mobile lines,” “The conduct of the defense must be aggressive,” and “The defense is built around a series of tactical localities, the retention of which will insure the integrity of the position. A battle position comprises a zone of resistance consisting of a number of mutually supporting defense areas disposed irregularly in width and in depth, each organized for all around defense with trenches, fox holes, obstacles, and emplacements. Tactical unity is maintained in each defensive area. A line joining the forward edge of the most advanced organized defense areas is called the main line of resistance. It is the line in front of which all elements of the defense must be able to concentrate their fire to break up the hostile attack.” (See FM 100–5, 1944, p. 178, pars. 631 and 632, and p. 164, par. 591, respectively.)

Two forms of defense were defined by the 1940 and subsequent *Field Regulations*—“sustained defense” and “mobile defense”:

Sustained defense has as its aim holding defined terrain, keeping from it the offensive of the enemy and defeating him. This is achieved by stubborn resistance in combination with determined counterattacks.

Mobile defense has as its aim to gain time, weaken the enemy, and preserve one’s forces at the expense of the loss of space.

Mobile defense is used in those cases where an overwhelming superiority of the enemy excludes the conduct of defense on a normal or wide front, and when the situation requires withdrawal from part of the space in order to preserve forces and gain time. Mobile defense is conducted in the above mentioned zone, and is effected by a series of consequent defensive battles on previously projected lines.²⁸

The Soviets criticize the German “elastic defense” strongly; but their form is substantially the same. The Soviet term “mobile defense” approximates the United States conception of a “delaying action.” While defensive deployment may be either mobile (elastic) or sustained (rigid), in all cases the defense is presumed to possess key sectors of decisive importance (the counterpart of the “direction of the main blow” of the offensive). Thus:

In taking the decision for defense, it is necessary for the command to determine that sector of the terrain on the holding of which the stability of the whole defense depends. That sector will be the main one. The main sector of defense must be defended by the basic [i.e., major] part of the forces and means.²⁹

Defense is also defined in terms of “normal front” and “wide front” breadths. The latter is frequently combined with mobile defense or a holding action in secondary directions.³⁰

At the time of the outbreak of the recent war, Soviet defensive doctrine was based on the above regulations. In practice, it was much weaker than these regulations suggest; and, indirectly, the Soviets themselves admit that their tremendous stress on “standing fast” in the early period of the war was not sound. Thus Lt. General Shilovsky, of the General Staff (Historical Division), wrote:

The army often organized its defense on the linear principle. But in the main direction, the commanders attempted to utilize in large measures a defense echeloned in depth, with important reserves and zones of regulated defense.

The war which the Soviet people conducted against Hitlerite Germany for the salvation of their motherland has enriched, perfected, added to the tactics of the Red Army. In place of the linear tactics, solemn and routine, the officers of the Red Army have applied with success the flexible tactics of maneuver in depth.³¹

The German generals were even more explicit. General Blumentritt noted that the Russians “repeatedly held on long enough to be encircled,” and Lt. General Dittmar said that the Soviets “confused firmness, which is indispensable in war, with obstinacy, which merely injures one’s own forces.”³²

The 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat* admits that “The opinion that a ‘weak place’ in defense exists wherever the line is not continuously occupied is not correct, as the Fatherland War demonstrates.”³³ A Soviet General Staff historical study even stated that “Contemporary defense must not fear breakthroughs on separate sectors ... even by a significant enemy group...,”³⁴

The use of defensive action to cover regrouping is now more clearly recognized in Soviet doctrine. In 1946 Major General Korkodinov, of the General Staff, stated:

Cover for the regrouping of troops and their concentration and development for offensive operations is effected, as a rule, by defensive actions of divisions, corps, and even armies. Maneuver of the main grouping of any army or Front, acting in offensive operations in the direction of the main blow, is secured by the cover of their flanks and rear by entire divisions, corps and armies, attacking in secondary directions or taking the defensive within defined limits.³⁵

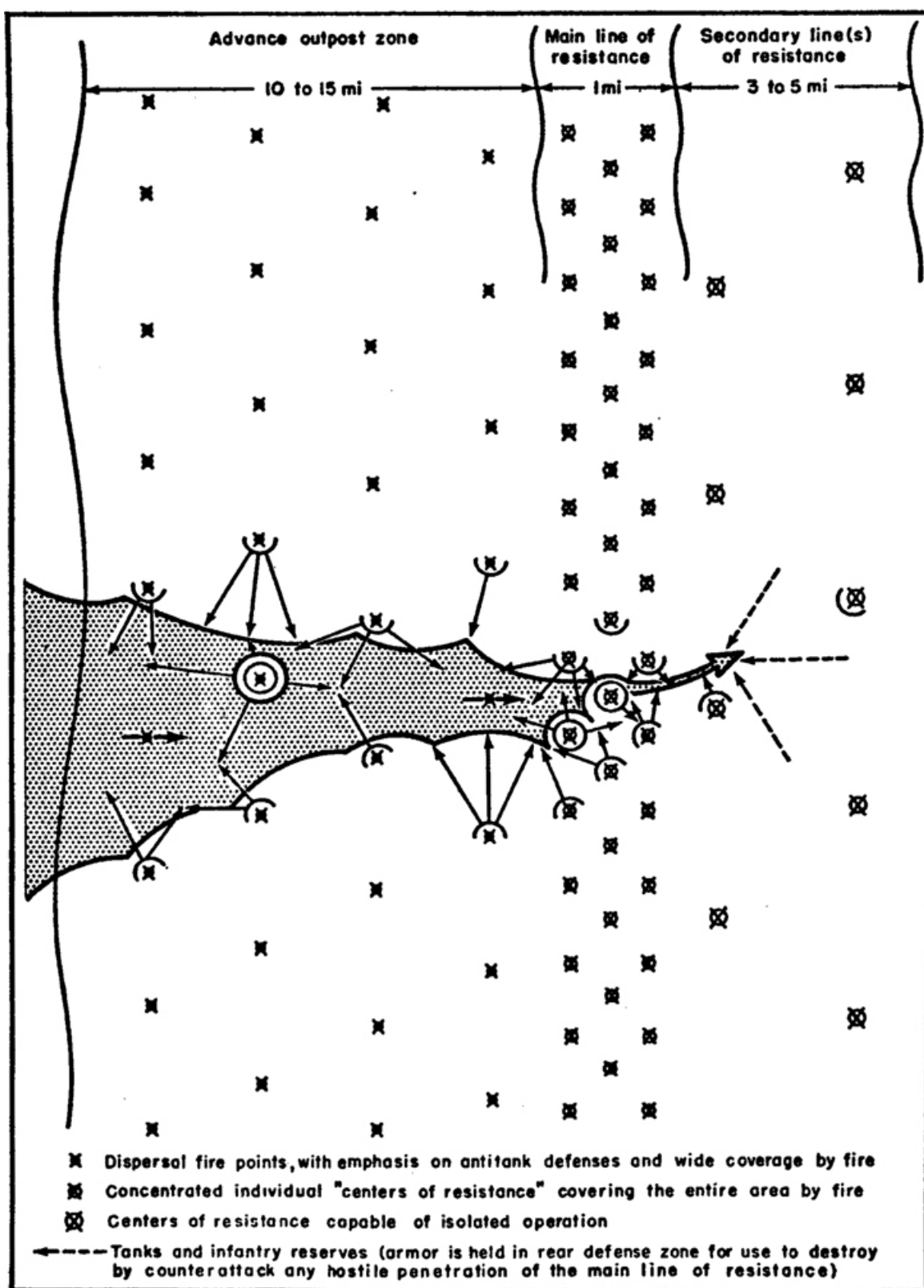
Soviet doctrine also distinguishes between “centralized” and “decentralized” defense, the former being favored. Centralization refers to the control over reserves and heavy supporting means (artillery and air support forces).

During the recent war, an army in defense was organized in several zones: an advance outpost zone, a main defensive zone, and one or more secondary defensive zones. The outposts extended up to 15 miles forward of the main zone and had the task of retarding the enemy advance. Air action and artillery fire were brought to bear there and strong mine fields were built. The main defensive zone, of approximately 1 mile in depth, was designed to halt the enemy advance . It was

composed of many individual strong points which covered the entire area with their fire. Emphasis was placed on anti-tank defense. Alternate defense positions characterized this zone and the secondary defense zone for a depth of several miles.³⁶ Armor was concentrated in the rear defense zones for use in counterattacks against any local breakthrough. Self-contained “centers (knots) of resistance” were prepared, in mobile defense, for continuing resistance even after a breakthrough and encirclement. In sustained defense, fortifications were organized in great depth, consisting of several alternate lines of defense (each complete with several rows of trenches, artillery and tank positions, obstacles, and even mine fields). The *dzot* (earth-and-timber field bunker) was the basic link, except for the individual foxhole. In addition to very complete field fortifications of this type, alternate positions for direct-fire artillery and tanks (often used “dug in,” in defense) were prepared in advance, as were well-camouflaged “dummy” positions. Soviet troops are taught always to “dig in” fully on the defensive and, while not actually advancing, on the offensive. German reports credit the Soviets (especially in the latter part of the war) with strong fortifications, tenaciousness, good fire discipline, and masterful camouflage.”³⁷

Sustained defense, in Soviet doctrine, stresses (a) firmness, (&) depth of defense, and (c) antitank defense measures. Mobile defense, or delaying action, stresses (a) constant harassment and counterattacks, (&) firm control over withdrawal, and (c) “scorched earth,” or destruction of resources useful to the enemy in areas to be abandoned.

The stress on “activeness” and “initiative” is characteristic of defensive as well as offensive doctrine. Although not absent in prewar doctrine, this stress was less obvious because of the over-all primacy of the offensive.³⁸ As one Soviet manual stated: “Defensive actions of detachments must be conducted in a spirit of activity, stubbornness, determination...,”³⁹ Current regulations also stress that “Defense must be sustained and active,” and that “Fortification measures undertaken by any body of troops must be such as to safeguard the



[Diagram of Sustained Defense in Soviet Doctrine](#)

liveliness and firmness of the defense.”⁴⁰ The Soviets have written much about the “active defense” of 1941–1942. Thus, Lt. General Shilovsky, of the General Staff, wrote:

In the first phase of the war, the Red Army, forced to withdraw toward the interior of the country, held on the strategic defensive, strove:

- to gain time for the deployment of the main forces;
- to harass, exhaust and weaken the enemy;
- to create the conditions which would permit passing to a general offensive.

This defense was active: the fierce struggle which was displayed on each line of defense was accompanied by powerful counterattacks.⁴¹

This has been frequently stated in describing the war of the period 1941-1942.⁴²

The Soviet conception of active defense includes the determined use of counterattacks to make the enemy advance as slow and costly as possible. The 1936 *Field Regulations* provided that:

For the counterattack all free forces must be used. The counterattack must be conducted to the reestablishment of the advance border.... Decision to cease a counterattack can only be taken by the division commander with immediate report to the corps commander.⁴³

As early as 1941, the Soviets counterattacked successfully in a number of instances; we may note the battles in the Dnepr-Berezina triangle and in the Poreche bridgehead on the Luga (both in the period from mid-July to August, 1941) and the meeting engagement near Plavskoe (November, 1941) as being three examples which the Germans themselves admitted did succeed in checking the *Wehrmacht* locally and temporarily.

Current Soviet doctrine on the preparation of counterattacks is as follows:

Counterattacks are conducted by forces of the second echelon or reserves with the aim of annihilating the enemy who have wedged into the defense, and reestablishing the original situation. Counterattacks are prepared already in the period of organization of defense, considering the most probable direction of attack by the enemy advance section, and his movement into the depth of the defense.⁴⁴

This strategy of active defense is said to pertain to all arms of troops.

The Counteroffensive

The consummation of this strategy of active defense is the transition to a mighty counteroffensive. Stalin, in his letter to Colonel Razin, stressed the distinction

between the counterattack [*kontrataka*] and the counteroffensive [*kontrnastuplenie*], the former being tactical and the latter strategic.* Stalin defined the counteroffensive as follows:

I speak of a counteroffensive after a successful offensive of the opponent, which however has not yielded decisive results, and in the course of which the defense collects its forces, shifts to the counteroffensive and inflicts upon the enemy a decisive defeat.⁴⁵

He referred to two historical precedents: “Even the ancient Parthians knew of that counteroffensive when they lured the Roman general Crassus and his troops into the depth of country, and then struck in a counteroffensive and destroyed them. Our strategist of genius, Kutuzov, very well knew of this also, when he destroyed Napoleon and his armies with the aid of a well-prepared counteroffensive.”⁴⁶ Major General Talensky also mentioned Crassus and Kutuzov (as well as Peter the Great and several Civil War campaigns) as precedents, but explained that although “The counteroffensive, as a strategic form of struggle, existed in ancient times; now in Stalinist strategy this form has received a new and unprecedented development.”⁴⁷ Marshals Bulganin and Voroshilov have similarly defined the counteroffensive.⁴⁸

* Corresponding to the previously discussed Soviet distinction between the three levels comprising the military art, one would logically anticipate an “operational” equivalent. Stalin failed to provide one (thus neglecting an opportunity to extend further the debt of “Stalinist military science” to him), but recent Soviet military writing has explicitly introduced such a term, the “counterblow” [*kontrudar*]. Thus, in current Soviet writing, and this example is explicit, the battle of Moscow is termed a “counterblow,” and not, as in early postwar accounts, a “counteroffensive.”

The great Soviet counteroffensive of 1943-1945 is now credited to Stalin, in the popular press, and described as a rare creative act.⁴⁹

Major General Talensky is a little more explicit regarding the nature of the strategic counteroffensive:

The counteroffensive, as a strategic form of struggle, represents the organized combination of operations of strategic significance, immediately following operations of strategic defense, and having the aim of seizing the operational and strategic initiative from the hands of the enemy, weakened by the preceding [Soviet] defensive operations, to defeat the main grouping of his forces and, by this means, to create the necessary conditions and lay the foundation for the general strategic offensive with the task of winning the campaign, and in some cases the war as a whole.

.....

For the successful strategic counteroffensive a correct selection of the direction of the main blow is required. This condition is basic for the success of any operation; but in the organization of strategic counteroffensive, it has particularly great significance. The main requirement or main task, which must be decided by the strategic counteroffensive, consists of the destruction of the basic attacking group of the foe, in which are concentrated his strategic force. Only in this case can be created the transition in the course of struggle on a strategic scale, that is the achievement of winning the campaign or war as a whole.⁵⁰

It is recognized in the more sober military press that this requires careful planning and preparation. As Talensky noted:.. as with any other form of struggle, it produces the necessary effect only by correct organization and preparation.”⁵¹ Major General Korkodinov also stressed the need for careful and limited commitment of forces to maintain active defense but at the same time “to economize forces for concentration for the counteroffensive.”⁵²

There has been a tendency in this country to misconceive the role of the counteroffensive in Soviet doctrine. The many Soviet statements extolling this form of warfare, based on the (necessarily) central significance of this strategy in the recent great war and echoing Stalin, have sometimes been erroneously assumed to denote a necessity or preference in Soviet military thinking for this form. Only by unwarranted ignoring of the offensive primacy in Soviet doctrine, clearly restated in postwar doctrine, and failing to recognize the Soviet conception of the relation of forces as determiner of offense and defense, can one be led to the mistaken conclusion that in any war the Soviets would prefer to assume the defense rather than to advance.

CHAPTER 5

THE PRINCIPLES OF MANEUVER

AND INITIATIVE

The Civil War and Maneuver

The early adherents of a new proletarian military doctrine stressed another principle along with the offensive—maneuver. This stress was based more on Civil War experience than on Marxian doctrine. Frunze, who led this argument, listed as “first and most important” of the military principles he advocated “the preparation and education of our army in the spirit of maneuver operations on a vast scale.”¹ Realizing that maneuver was not a strategic objective, he said:

Maneuver is not an end in itself. It is only one of the means to the achievement of the basic aim—victory by means of annihilating the organized armed forces of the foe and possession of his population bases.²

But many of his supporters went much further. They presented the lessons of the Civil War as applying to all future war. Thus, one wrote that: “*Any* war under contemporary conditions *must* clearly bear an express maneuver character.”³

Trotsky again led the opposition, declaring that “In contradistinction to the ‘imperialistic’ principle of positional warfare, there sprang up already at the end of 1917 the absolute [“proletarian”] principle of maneuverability.” He argued that the White strategy was also one of maneuver, and that this was owing, on both sides, to the objective situation—terrain, military technology,

and the number of men: “Maneuver characterized the Civil War in both camps.”⁴

Frunze objected that the maneuver character of the Red Army was not due solely to objective circumstances, but also “to the inner nature of the Red Army.”⁵ Trotsky also noted the effect of this idea on the organization of the Red Army:

The organizational form of the army was subordinated to the revolutionary maneuver strategy; the corps, division, even the brigade was too heavy a unit. ... In its essence this was the ideology of partisanism [*partizanshchina*—the pejorative form] slightly dressed up. On the extreme “Left” flank of partisanism this was openly defended.⁶

Although some Soviet military historians of the Civil War, notably N. Kakurin,⁷ did not believe that maneuver was the main military cause of Red victory, their view was a feeble undercurrent in the dominant military doctrine after 1925. The stress on maneuver was applied to doctrine of the cavalry and aviation especially and, in the early 1930’s, to that of tanks.⁸

By the mid-1930’s, however, and particularly in the extremely important 1936 *Field Regulations*, this theory of the peculiar applicability of maneuver to Red Army operations was greatly reduced, although war by maneuver continued to be stressed. Marshal Tukhachevsky’s commentary on these *Regulations* attacked this theory, even though he once had declared that “Maneuver is the sole means of securing victory.”⁹ This passage deserves quotation here as being an indication of Soviet thought on the principle of maneuver (and the employment of armor) as of 1937:

First of all there was the theory of the “special” maneuverability of the Red Army, a theory based not on the study and appraisal of the new armaments of our potential enemies and in our own hands, but only on some of the lessons of the Civil War, based more on views suggested by the heroic sentiments of the Civil War, than on the growth of the might, culture, of the large industry of the socialist state, and also on the growth of the armed forces of our potential opponents from the capitalist camp....

Adherents of this theory saw in the new man, the Soviet worker and collective farmer, all that is necessary and sufficient in order to secure a war of maneuver. How to overcome the mighty machine-gun power of the contemporary enemy is not to be learned from this theory. The disciples of this theory more dreamed than demonstrated. Some comrades were found, for example, who asserted that in training a fighter of the Red Army for the attack it was possible to use less artillery ammunition than in preparing a soldier of a capitalist army for the attack, explaining this on the superiority of the spirit of the Red Army man. In actual warfare this self-deception could only lead

to unnecessary losses and serious set-backs. This theory is incompatible with the demand made by Comrade Voroshilov concerning military training: to learn to win with “small loss of blood.”

The course of development of the armament of the Red Army has refuted the theory of “special” maneuverability. The swift growth of our aviation, tanks and mechanized formations at first also provoked some to a theoretical twist of the Fuller type. This was manifested as a new “maneuver” theory which considered that the great speed of the tank did not permit its use productively in combined operation with the infantry. From this grew an attempt to claim the complete independence of tank formations, to their separation from the main-combined troop army mass, to the disregard for anti-tank fire of the enemy and nonunderstanding of the requirement that tanks, like infantry, cannot successfully act in combined troop combat without mighty artillery support....¹⁰

Despite the strong ideological stress on maneuver (as maintaining the initiative) and the fact that many Soviet military leaders had had no significant military training except their Civil War experience (which was largely maneuver warfare), there was no attempt to adopt a true maneuver strategy. Although the Western theories of tank warfare were available, as Tukhachevsky’s account indicates these theories were not developed in Soviet doctrine, which continued to stress combined operation of armor with the infantry and artillery.

The Soviets claim that the Civil War experience in maneuver warfare gave a great advantage to Soviet commanders in the recent war; for example, Major General Korkodinov wrote:

One must not omit the fact that the civil war, the experience of which Western European military thought cast aside as not answering the conditions of modern war, gave to Soviet military science very rich materials for constructing its theory, and to the old commanders of the Red Army irreplaceable experience in directing troops in exceptionally active and mobile operations on a wide scale—experience which could not be gained in the first World War, and which indeed was extremely valuable in the second World War.¹¹

While this influence may have enhanced the ability of certain former Civil War commanders (notably Marshal Konev and the late General Vatutin), the most famous of these men (especially Marshals Voroshilov and Budenny) failed in contemporary war in 1941 and were swiftly relieved of their field commands.

Maneuver and Initiative

In 1921, in his debate with Frunze, Trotsky argued that “The fundamental characterization of a strategy of maneuver is *not the formal offensive, but initiative and action*”¹² Trotsky’s charge that Frunze, Voroshilov, and their colleagues sought the “formal offensive” and failed in due concern for the initiative is only partially justified. As we have seen, they did put undue stress on the principle of the offensive, but this was not owing to failure to grasp the importance of initiative; on the contrary, this motivated them in their stress on both the offensive and maneuver.

Maneuver is accepted in Soviet doctrine as being a basic combat mode and characteristic. The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated:

Maneuver in battle is one of the most important conditions for gaining success. Maneuver is expressed in the organized movement of troops, supported by the entire might of fire, with the aim of placing them in the most favorable situation vis-i-vis the enemy.¹³

The 1944 *Field Regulations* and the 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated that “contemporary combat actions have a predominantly maneuver character”¹⁴ and Lt. General Burshtynovich declared that “The most characteristic sign of the tactics of offensive combat of the Soviet Army are brave and decisive maneuvers, and consist fundamentally of the Stalinist tactic of maneuver.”¹⁵

This conception of maneuver stresses activity, flexibility, and initiative. As General Fomichenko wrote:

The chief method of operation of the Red Army is maneuvering. These are tactics which fully answer the demands of modern warfare. Their effectiveness depends upon boldness, originality and flexibility. They make it possible to strike decisive blows at the enemy, to surround him and annihilate him.¹⁶

Of the many descriptions of the alleged adroit use of maneuver by the Red Army, we shall quote one here because of its relatively explicit description of strategic maneuver in general. In this quotation, Major General Korkodinov, of the General Staff, has described the essence of maneuver: maintaining the initiative. He described, as one of the “fundamental bases of the operating art of the Red Army,”

Securing freedom of maneuver. In contemporary war, bearing a wide maneuver character, it is necessary both in the preparatory period and in the course of operations to preserve for oneself freedom of maneuver, that is, freedom to select this or that maneuver, this or that regrouping of

forces most expedient in the given circumstantial conditions, and the possibility of swift and concealed effecting of the maneuver or regrouping.

Securing time, space, and favorable conditions for the realization of any maneuver which could be used to utilize the circumstances for a swifter fulfillment of the set tasks was during the Fatherland War one of the most important concerns of the command of operational formations.

.....

In the process of an operation it is necessary constantly to be concerned with securing freedom of maneuver.¹⁷

Soviet accounts of the recent war usually admit that the loss of initiative after the German invasion was due, as Stalin put it, to the “transitory factor of surprise.” Soviet strategy until the battle of Stalingrad is described as the struggle to seize the strategic initiative once again. In some accounts, however, the loss of initiative is not even admitted. Thus, “The Supreme Command of the Red Army prepared for defensive operations, *as if yielding the initiative to the enemy.*”¹⁸

This stress on seizing and maintaining the strategic initiative pervades Soviet military doctrine. As Lt. General Zlobin advised: “Always be active and resort to maneuver”; and “Try to seize the initiative after selecting the opportune moment, and don’t give it back to the enemy.”¹⁹ On the tactical level, the junior officer is told: “Our regulations teach that success is always on the side of he who, bold in combat, constantly preserves the initiative in his own hands, and dictates his will to the enemy.”²⁰ We noted previously the Soviet stress on seizing the initiative in an encounter and swiftly transforming it into an offensive battle. Surprise is sought (and feared) for the same reason: it holds the initiative.

One of the main reasons for this stress on the seizing and maintaining of the initiative (supplementing and intensifying the usual military bases for favoring the initiative) is an ideological attitude. Bolshevik political doctrine similarly evidences strong regard for the maneuver and the initiative.²¹ From the Bolshevik viewpoint, if the initiative is not firmly held and used to destroy the enemy, then the enemy will seize the initiative and destroy them. Thus, reflecting in their own actions their perverted image of “the enemy,” who they believe is always actively seeking to destroy them, the Bolsheviks feel compelled to use the initiative to destroy him first. The central question in Bolshevik thinking is not “Will there be a conflict?” but “What form of conflict is most advantageous for us to use to destroy the enemy?” Who will prevail over whom? [*Kto kogo?*] Thus, seizure and vigorous use of the

initiative “control” enemy action by preventing the enemy from imposing his will on one, and offer increased opportunities for the imposing of one’s own will on the enemy. This is manifestly aggressive, but it is also in part a defensive reaction to the fear that unless the enemy is “controlled” by being forced to take countermeasures against Bolshevik action, he will “control” the Bolsheviks by using his initiative to dictate their behavior.

By abdicating the initiative one is believed to become “dependent” on the enemy by merely countering the enemy’s moves. This fear of dependency, of becoming a “tool” of enemy initiative, is important both in Bolshevik political and military behavior. To retain the initiative and control the situation, to remain undiverted by “chance” occurrences, or merely to counter enemy moves, a “plan” is considered necessary. This “plan” in turn tends, however, as we shall see later, to nullify initiative on subordinate levels.

Mobility and Speed

In implementing the principles of maneuver and the initiative, the qualities of mobility, maneuverability, flexibility, and speed are most sought. The 1936 *Field Regulations* stated:

Speed of action in conjunction with organization, expert maneuver and dextrous application to the terrain, with an account of the enemy’s air, is a basic guarantee of success in battle. Troops having quickly executed a disposition, quickly regrouped with a changing situation, quickly arising from rest, quickly perfecting a campaign movement, quickly falling out in combat order and opening fire, having quickly attacked and pursued the opponent, can always count on success.²²

And the 1940 *Regulations* stated:

Thorough organization of combined action of the types of troops, speed, momentum, concealment and surprise of their actions, have decisive significance for the success of maneuver.²³

As Frunze declared in 1921, “We need bold and free flight, we need mobility.”²⁴ Mobility, and the advantage it gives in maintaining the initiative, assists in altering the relation of forces to one’s advantage. Mobility and speed are sought because they permit surprise blows, save time, and maintain the initiative. As Major General Egorov wrote, “Mobility of troops

economizes time in battle. *Time in war is all.*²⁵ Speed best gains time. Tukhachevsky stated that “The fundamental condition of successful maneuver is speed of movement...”²⁶ Many Soviet accounts during and following the recent war have stressed the speed and mobility of Soviet aviation, armor, cavalry, and infantry. Thus, Lt. General Zlobin wrote:

The employment of armored and mechanized troops, aircraft, artillery, and airborne forces has brought impetus, swiftness, an element of surprise and a striking force into the course of military operations, and has also created preliminary conditions for an increase of the mobility of armies, at the same time considerably reducing the possibility of positional warfare. The operational possibilities of these new weapons increased the depth and range of operations, made it possible to split the organizational structure of the enemy along the front and in depth into separate isolated pockets and destroy them one by one.²⁷

In the second half of the recent war, the tempo of pursuit, according to Soviet figures, was usually from 20 to 40 kilometers per day, and tank spearheads advanced 100 kilometers per day.²⁸

Activity and Anti-Passivity

Our discussions of offensive and defensive doctrine and the principles of maneuver and the initiative have already pointed to the strong Soviet preference for activity and the fear of passivity. Passivity, which permits the enemy to seize the initiative, is considered almost equivalent to doom. As the regulations on meeting engagements state, “He who will delay and shilly-shally in his place awaiting a clarified situation will himself inform the enemy and lose the initiative.”²⁹ The *Cavalry Combat Regulations* also state that “The greatest mistake of the command is not to decide on anything, or to decide too late.”³⁰ Stalin once remarked:

In military affairs, especially in contemporary war, one cannot stand in one place; to remain, in military affairs, means to fall behind; and those who fall behind, as is well known, are killed.³¹

In the race to answer “Who will prevail over whom?” activity permits one, by holding the initiative, to force one’s will upon the enemy and destroy him. This pervades Soviet thought to the extent that every minor gain is seen

in terms of this one central question. Thus, “Activity in combat is conducted in order continually to force and dictate one’s will on the enemy, forever and everywhere it is possible to deal a blow to the enemy, to harass and bleed him to gain daily and hourly even small successes.”³²

Frunze insisted that “The tactics of the Red Army were and will be impregnated with activity...”³³ After the last war, Professor Leonov wrote that “Wars of a proletarian army must be distinguished by consciousness, activity, initiative...”³⁴ Colonel Potekhin wrote that “activity, initiative and resourcefulness are the important combat qualities,”³⁵ and Major General Pukhovsky wrote of “The tactics of Soviet troops, completely corresponding to the bold, decisive and active character of our strategy and operating art...”³⁶

As later discussion will show, some matters which we tend to think of as predominantly “passive,” such as camouflage, are considered by the Soviets to be “active.” In some cases passivity may be recognized as a “planned” and controlled maneuver (i.e., one retaining the initiative, for deceptive purposes); e.g., tactically, as in camouflage of an ambush. On the national-strategic level, the “passivity” of the Nazi-Soviet Pact period was calculated; and in Soviet writing the Western allies are said consciously to have remained “passive” (i.e., to have failed to open the second front) to allow the German and Soviet armies to wear each other out.³⁷

The important thing is to have a *counterplan* embodying the *initiative* and then *actively* to implement it. The Soviets fear that passivity, “objectively,” places one in the position of being subordinated to the will of the enemy. *Kto kogo?*

Positional Warfare

In advocating a strategy of maneuver as a basic component of Soviet military doctrine, Frunze and his colleagues denied to positional warfare any significant place in future wars. Frunze stated, in 1924, that “The development of military technique and new weapons, flying, chemistry, armored shock forces, and so on, will lead to a situation in which a continuous fixed line or front will hardly be possible over any considerable

distance and for any length of time.”³⁸ But Frunze and most of the adherents of maneuver warfare admitted that positional warfare had a place, albeit subsidiary, in contemporary war. Thus, Frunze also said: “No dominantly maneuver war can ever be conducted totally without elements of positional warfare. The very securing of maneuver already demands in a certain situation and in certain conditions the application of positional modes. Therefore, the familiarity of the Red Army with these forms of combat is a standing necessity for every Red commander.”³⁹ In general, this matter was not clearly settled in the 1920’s.⁴⁰ By the time that Tukhachevsky wrote his commentary on the 1936 *Field Regulations*, it was recognized that positional warfare was possible, although avoidable and to be avoided.⁴¹

In developing the concepts of mobile and sustained defensive strategies, sustained defense naturally stresses fortification, with deep defensive zones of advance obstacles and mines and especially antitank defense.⁴² Mobile defense is also based on “centers of resistance.”⁴³

By the time of the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, Soviet doctrine was caught between adequate positional and maneuver strategies. The “Stalin Line,” along the general line Uman-Kiev-Vitebsk-Staraia Russa, had been largely demobilized following the occupation, in 1939-1940, of more westerly lands in the Baltic states, Poland, and Rumania, and the heavy troop concentrations on the new frontier had no adequate positional fortifications. However, their concentrated deployment so close to the frontier did not permit adequate maneuver, and after cutting off and encircling vast numbers of them, the Germans easily penetrated the Stalin Line with its inadequate defenders. Later Soviet writing usually refers to the 1941 strategy as “linear” and states that this was replaced soon by maneuver warfare (the great retreat), omitting reference to the cause for this “linear” fallacy and, of course, not mentioning its existence in the usual accounts, which mention only Frunze’s stress on maneuver and then the “brilliant Stalinist maneuver” which is said to have characterized Red Army operations of 1942-1945. Stalin himself said during the war: “Tens of thousands of commanders of the Red Army have become expert military leaders ... they have abandoned the stupid and pernicious linear tactics and have definitely adopted the tactics of mobile warfare.”⁴⁴

Fortified places, in ascending order of magnitude, are termed “strong points” [*upornye punkty*], “centers of resistance” [*uzly soprotivleniia*], and

“fortified regions” [*ukreplennye raiony*.] All defenses are constructed by an improvement of natural and created terrain features and obstacles and mines, but the above three terms describe degrees of fortification. The 1936 *Field Regulations* stated that: “Fortified regions ... secure to the command freedom of maneuver, and permit the creation of mighty groupings for dealing to the foe a crushing blow.”⁴⁵

The siege of Leningrad (1941-1944) offers an example of sustained positional warfare in a heavily fortified area in the Soviet-German war. As one Soviet writer describing this stated: “The methods of fighting him [the enemy] here are not like the ordinary ones. All along the front there are fortified defense positions and innumerable obstacles.”⁴⁶ Two Soviet officers who participated in the defense of Leningrad described it (in idealized terms) as follows:

When we speak of anti-tank strong points and centers of resistance, we have in mind above all artillery, its distribution, its fire system. A tremendous mass of guns stood in position open, semi-concealed, concealed, but all screened from observation, invulnerable to the shells and bombs of the foe. Guns seemed to have grown from the ground, in concrete, dressed in armor. The artillerymen, with the aid of sappers [engineers] constructed pill-boxes, bunkers, stable cover, from local materials....

Guns placed in direct fire positions, constructed into anti-tank strong points and centers of resistance, in combination with the groups of artillery, prepared for massed fire at any point of the front, were the backbone of the defense of Leningrad. It was necessary to direct all this massive and exceptionally complex organism to maneuver flexibly, to commit it here and there as needed, immediately when it was required and as much as was required.⁴⁷

A useful article on “permanent defense systems,” written by Colonel A. Lebedev in 1945, sets forth rather clearly current Soviet doctrine on positional forms of warfare as modified by wartime experience.⁴⁸ The author discusses three postwar ideas on positional fortifications: (a) modernized detached fortresses; (b) mobile fortifications ; and (c) fortified regions and zones. The first he dismisses as a proven failure in both World Wars, and detached fortresses are declared obsolete. (As examples, he names Namur, Liege, Antwerp, and Novogeorgievsk; Verdun is said to have been an “exception.”) Mobile fortifications (which are not clearly defined) are said to be weak and very difficult to handle in the period of mobilization. Fortified regions and zones, by which the author means an uninterrupted (in terms of cross-fire coverage) front of small permanent structures echeloned in depth with protected flanks, are considered to be best.

There are four missions of the fortified zone:

- (a) to serve as stable sectors in case of a breakthrough of the general strategic front;
- (b) to attract and tie down for a long period large enemy forces and means;
- (f) to serve as an area of departure for the offensive;
- (d) to offer considerable economy of defense forces.^{[49](#)}

These fortified areas and zones constitute the basis of sustained defense and are structured with great depth. The author describes them as follows:

... impenetrability is secured by echeloning fire structure in depth and establishing fortified zones comprising several sections. The attacking enemy troops should be left with only one type of maneuver, namely a frontal blow aiming at a breakthrough. After breaking through the front and neutralizing the defense structures along the axis of his blow, the enemy is gradually drawn into a “pocket,” bordered by fortified structures echeloned in depth, compartments of terrain and a second zone; as he has very limited possibilities to expand towards the flanks, he is doomed to destruction in that “pocket” by the fire and counterblows of the defenders.^{[50](#)}

Colonel Lebedev considers both the Maginot and Siegfried Lines as being fortified regions and declares that the former was not tested owing to successful German outflanking, and that the latter was “only partly broken” by the Allies because the defending forces were so few and poor. A fortified region must have a permanent garrison plus field troops. The Finnish Mannerheim Line, penetrated by the Red Army in 1940 only with great losses and after considerable difficulty, is not discussed at all.

This article reflects current Soviet doctrine, except for the discussion which praises the Maginot and Siegfried Lines and the possible defensive bias of the author.

CHAPTER 6

FORMS OF OFFENSIVE

MANEUVER

Soviet military literature clearly defines four basic forms of offensive maneuver.¹ They are:

The frontal blow [*frontal'nyi udar*]

The breakthrough [*proryv*]

Flanking [*obkhod*]

Envelopment [*okhvat*]

All offensive action is assumed to be undertaken by one or more of these forms of maneuver, usually by several in combination. All have the further aim of encirclement [*okruzhenie*] and consequent annihilation in detail [*po chastiam*] of the encircled enemy.

Lt. General Zlobin has expatiated on the combinations of forms of offensive maneuver and the factors governing their application. He wrote:

Maneuvers in front operations can be manifold. Their application depends upon the forces and means at the disposal of the front, the relation of forces, character of the theater of operations, presence of fortifications, task of the front, and intention of the supreme command. The basic types of operational maneuvers are the following:

- A breakthrough with several blows to smash the enemy front and annihilate its splintered groups one by one;
- A blow on a narrow front with subsequent widening of the breakthrough by blows delivered in different directions;
- A concentric blow by two assault formations;
- A breakthrough with subsequent combined flanking and envelopment of the basic enemy group from one or both flanks;
- A blow by one of the flanks to envelop and encircle the basic enemy forces;

—A joint blow with the neighboring Front, and encirclement of the enemy.²

In Soviet doctrine, flanking attacks are employed to harass the enemy's flanks and rear by independent detachments whose actions are not directly coordinated with frontal firepower. Envelopment operations are directed against the enemy's flanks and rear in direct coordination with frontal attacks and firepower and aim at encirclement of the enemy force.³

Striking the entire depth of the enemy's defense simultaneously has been stressed in Soviet doctrine ever since 1936. The *Field Regulations* of that year stated:

Contemporary technical means of struggle permit the attainment of a simultaneous blow on the enemy's battle order in the entire depth of its disposition. The potentialities for swift alterations of grouping, sudden flanking and seizure of the enemy's rear region with a gaining on the path of his withdrawal, are greatly increased.⁴

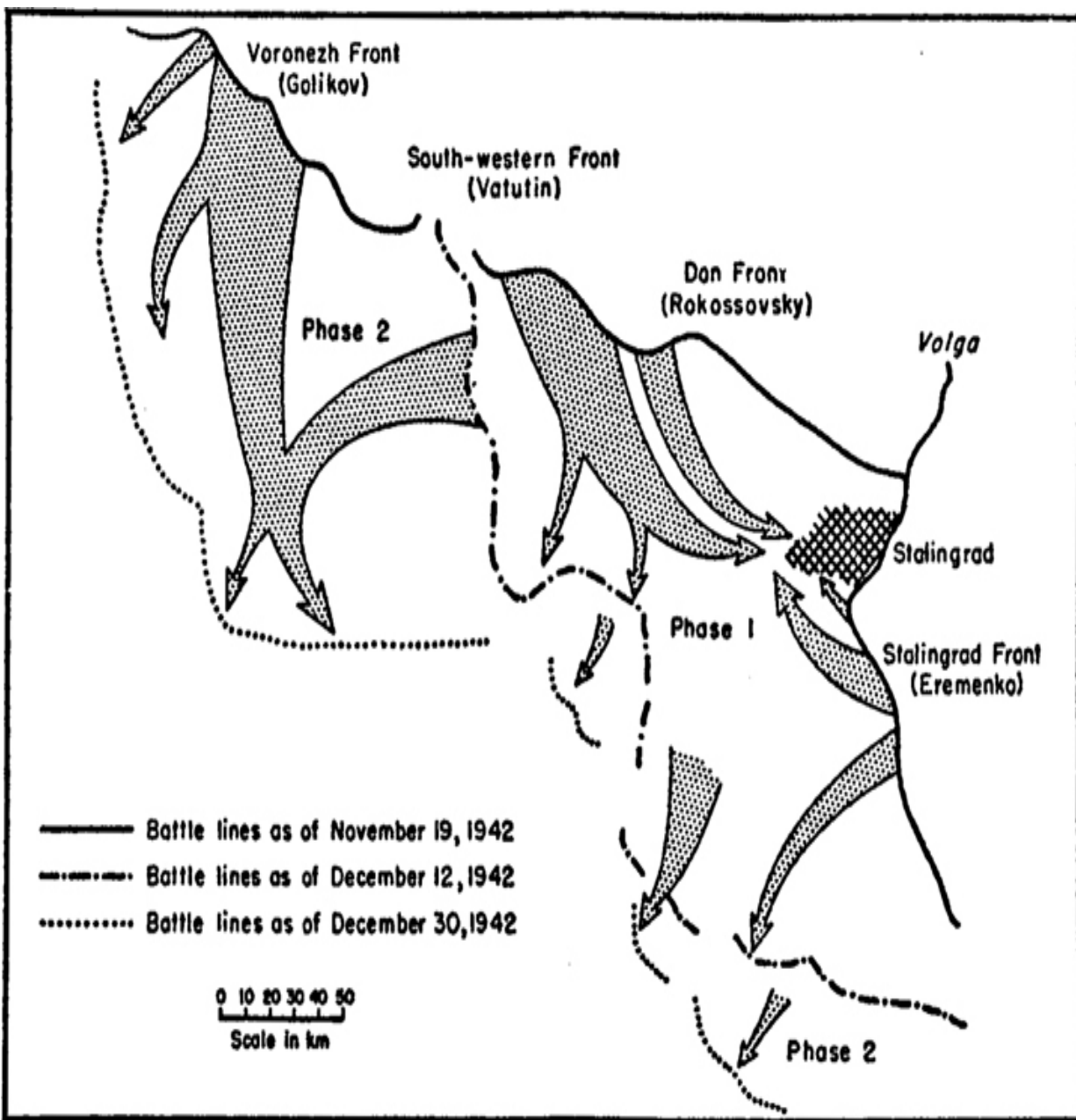
Multiple simultaneous attacks on a wide front are also used in order to obscure the direction of the main blow in the initial phases of assault. This is not permitted to interfere with the concentration of a strong superiority of forces at the decisive points of contact.⁵

Thus Major General (then Colonel) Zamiatin wrote, concerning the Stalingrad operation:

If we had struck out from one direction only, the Germans could within two days have concentrated against this breakthrough at least six divisions, including four tank divisions. But as the lines were broken in several places at once, the German High Command was unable from the very start to do much maneuvering, still less to regroup its reserves for a massive counter-blow.... Our penetration was, moreover, in many places, as much as forty kilometers deep on the very first day, with the result that all contact was lost between many of the enemy's army units.... There is no doubt that by organizing our offensive over a front of more than 400 kilometers we prevented the enemy's reconnaissance from focusing its attention on any particular sector. That made for secrecy and surprise.⁶

Other statements could be quoted. For example, Lt. General Zlobin also concluded that "A breakthrough of the front in several directions appears to be the most advantageous type of maneuver."⁷ Major General Korkodinov stated that "Our High Command in the Fatherland War dealt a series of blows on the front of greatest span in almost all large operations."⁸ And Colonel Pavlenko stated: "In order to deal a decisive defeat to an operational-strategic

grouping, it is necessary to deal a series of mighty blows on a wide front, which would encompass the major part of the enemy's forces.”⁹



[The Stalingrad-Don Counter-offensive \(November 19 - December 30, 1942\)](#) This map, based on a Soviet General Staff map of this operation, indicates a typical Soviet action over a wide front. The maps appearing on pages 114 and 115 show the subsequent operation for the liquidation of the Stalingrad encirclement, pictured above on the extreme right.

Many examples of this could be found in the latter years of the Soviet-German war. In Belorussia in June, 1944, six major attacks were launched simultaneously over a front of 400 miles; and in July, 1944, five attacks were

made in the Western Ukraine on a front of 170 miles. The Germans were frequently unable to stop even several of these blows, and premature commission of reserves (or, most usually, absence of adequate reserves) left an opening for deep penetration and required considerable distance of withdrawal to a defense line which could be held. It is necessary to note that these Soviet successes were caused not only by Soviet offensive maneuver, but by the great numerical inferiority of the German adversary in men and materiel, and by the faulty defense arrangements on which Hitler insisted.

The Frontal Blow and Breakthrough

Soviet military doctrine regards a frontal assault as being the basic and most frequent maneuver of advance against a hostile army. Even prior to the recent war, it was stated in *General Tactics* that

The frontal offensive is the most complex, but as military history bears witness, also the most widely used form of offensive in view of the great compactness, and saturation of contemporary theaters of military action with troops.^{[10](#)}

The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* and 1944 *Field Regulations* restate this on the basis of the experience of the German-Soviet war.^{[11](#)}

The general pattern of a frontal blow has been described in our discussion of the offensive.^{[12](#)} The frontal blow may take several forms. That most frequently employed is termed the “crushing blow” [*sokrushitel'nyi udar*]. The crushing blow, when successful, overwhelms the hostile defense by vastly superior forces and shock power, splinters it into parts, and destroys them in detail. As Major General Subbotin described it, “Thanks to the massed use of forces, offensive operations took the form of deep crushing blows. They split apart, disperse, and splinter the unified operating structure of the enemy into separate isolated parts, and create the conditions for the annihilation of the enemy grouping in detail.”^{[13](#)} The depth of the offensive force depends on the (estimated) depth of hostile defense. *General Tactics* stated:

Offensive combat demands constant supply of manpower from depth. Therefore the structure of combat order must be *deeply echeloned* and in correspondence with the depth of the enemy's

defense, its degree of preparedness, and the depth of the offensive task.¹⁴

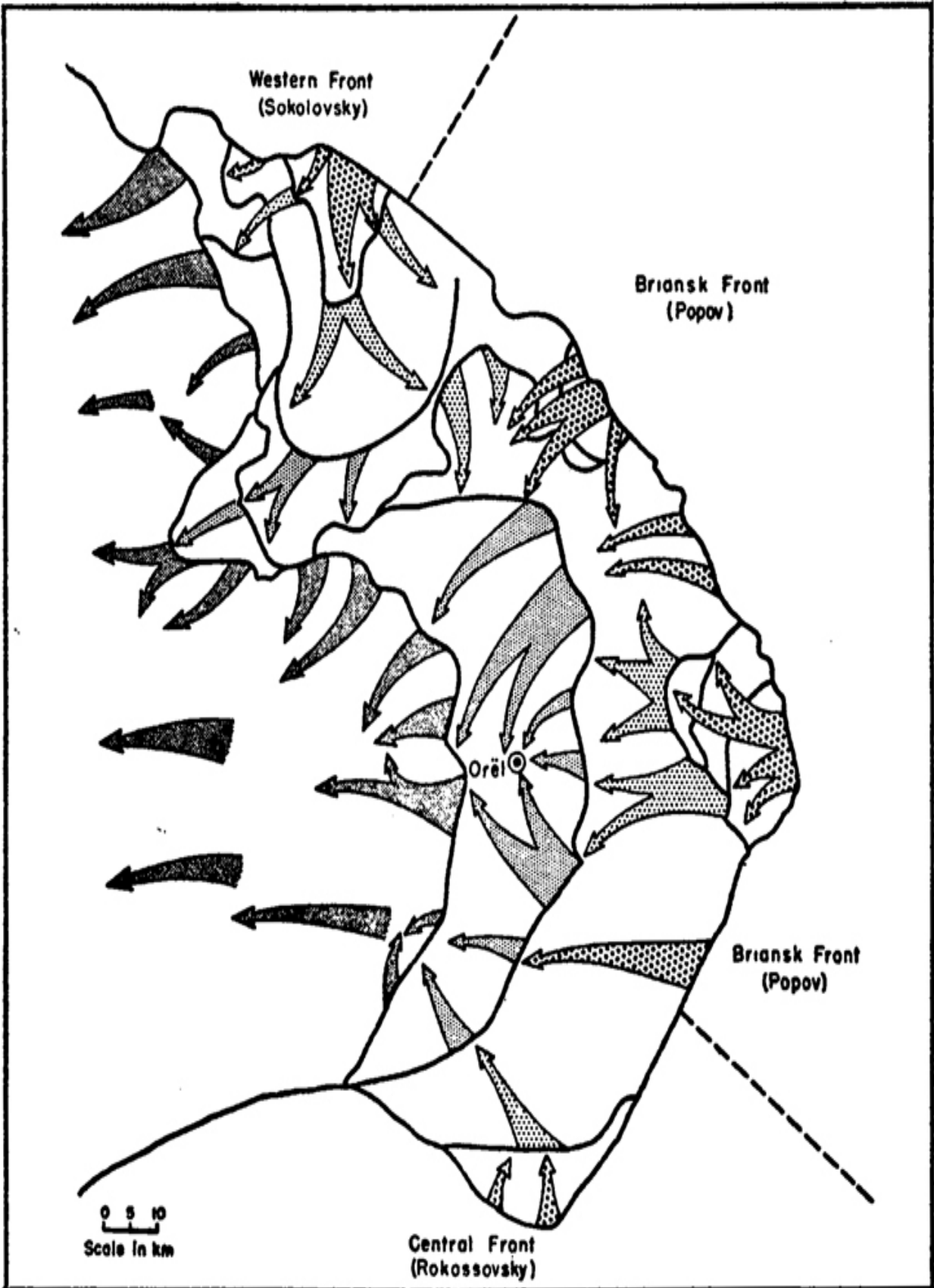
The aim of any frontal blow is a breakthrough of the hostile defense line.

The 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat* listed three requirements for a breakthrough by a group of armies:

- (a) possession of the forces and means for the creation of the required compactness of the blow, and dealing the blow simultaneously in the whole depth of the enemy's defense;
- (b) a deeply constructed battle order;
- (c) existence of continuity and accumulation of force of the blow from the rear, together "to the complete annihilation of the enemy by the attacking groups."¹⁵

Breakthroughs are distinguished, on the basis of their depth of effective penetration, as breakthroughs of strategic, operational, or tactical defense.¹⁶ According to Lt. General Yarchevsky, a breakthrough of the enemy's first, or first and second, defensive zones is not a breakthrough of tactical defense. A breakthrough of tactical defense is the breaching of a compact front of tactically organized resistance of the first operational echelon of the defending troops.¹⁷ This tactical defense is assumed to extend from 4 to 12 (sometimes even to 17) kilometers in depth, depending on the enemy's evaluation of the importance of the sector and his available forces. The average width of breakthroughs has been estimated as being from 15 to 30 kilometers in the Soviet-German war.¹⁸

Operational defense extends up to 50 kilometers. Once this operational zone is penetrated in force, the enemy may not be able to halt the offensive until it has gained several hundred kilometers. The breakthrough capability of a typical Front of five or six armies plus strong supporting formations, operating on a front from 200 to 300 kilometers in width, was estimated by Lt. General Zlobin to permit an initial breakthrough on a zone 40 to 70 kilometers in width.¹⁹



The Soviet Offensive on Orel (July 1-2 – August 17, 1943)

The Soviet Offensive on Orel demonstrates the use of several coordinated frontal blows and breakthroughs, leading to the double envelopment of Orel and the penetration of the entire tactical defense line in the Orel salient.

“A breakthrough of strategic significance,” in Lt. General Yarchevsky’s words, “is usually affected by blows on a series of strategic and operational directions ... executing a united strategic mission and pursuing a united objective.” As examples he gave the Belorussian and Jassy-Kishinev operations of 1944 and the joint operation of the First and Second Belorussian and First Ukrainian Fronts in 1945.²⁰ Other examples of operational or strategic significance mentioned by Major General Talensky as outstanding examples of frontal blows were the operations of 1943 and 1944 at Kursk-Orel, on the Mius and Molochna Rivers, before Leningrad, on the Perekop peninsula, before Sevastopol, at Kiev, and at Kovel’.²¹

The Salient Thrust

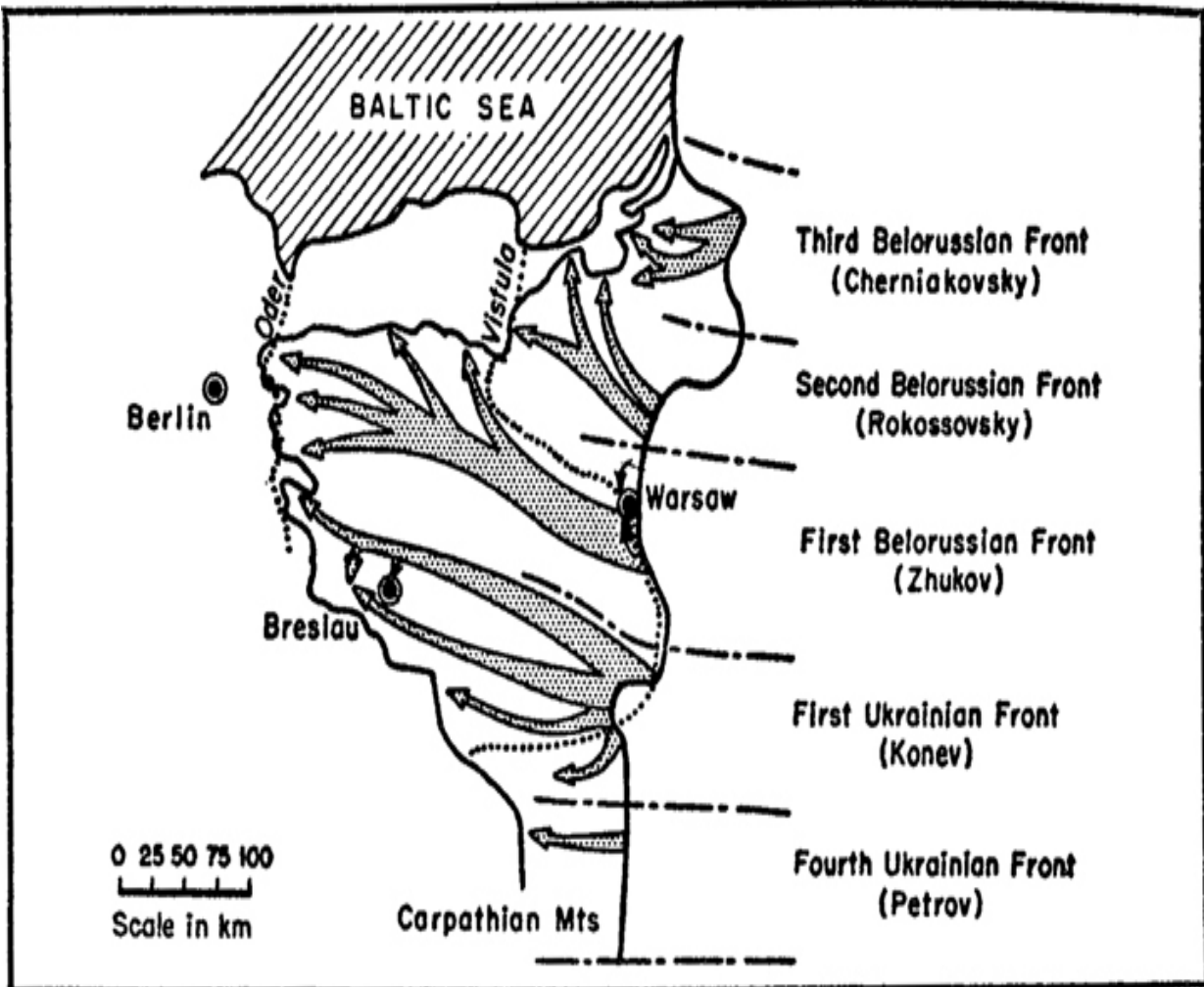
Because of the particular significance, the relative novelty in Soviet doctrine, and the ambiguous relation to the strategy of blitzkrieg of the “salient thrust” as a form of frontal offensive maneuver, it is discussed here separately. The salient thrust, or “cutting” or “slicing” blow [*rassekaiushchti udar*], is most accurately explained as a development of the usual “crushing blow” of frontal attack when one or several deep penetrations “slice” the enemy defense.

Major General Talensky described this as one of the “new forms of operating-tactical mastery born of Stalinist strategic genius.”²² Major General Zamiatin, in 1945, discussed this new form of frontal blow. According to him, World War I, and consequently interwar doctrine, was characterized by frontal blows of limited objective which rarely succeeded:

During the Fatherland War troops of the Red Army repeatedly used with great success the so-called “salient thrust.” The essence of this maneuver is: a strong” group strikes such a crushing blow at the enemy defenses that usually within a short time (usually the first day) the defense becomes disrupted throughout the entire tactical depth, and with the bringing up of strong mobile formations [mechanized divisions] the break-through assumes an operational character....

The salient thrust was used by Red Army troops when there was no compact enemy group worth encirclement or when the terrain did not offer favorable conditions for the execution of a maneuver

against the flanks of the resisting enemy, especially when a quick slicing of the enemy front was required to create favorable prerequisite operations for new blows.²³



[The Soviet Winter Offensive of 1945 \(December 16, 1944 – February 15, 1945\)](#)
The Soviet offensive from the Vistula to the Oder illustrates the “salient thrust” type of offensive.

The following operations are cited as examples of the salient thrust: in the Kiev direction in September, 1943, in the Uman direction in March, 1944, in Belorussia in July, 1944, the crossing of the Dnepr, Polesse, from Tukums to Libau, and from the Vistula to the Oder in 1945. In most cases the pattern seems to indicate deep operational or strategic penetration by direct frontal advance in situations in which initial envelopment is not feasible (although envelopment may subsequently be made, as in the Belorussian operation of July, 1944, where the enemy front was first “sliced” into several isolated sectors, which was followed by an encirclement 20 to 40 kilometers from the original front). This thrust is credited by Zamiatin with defeating the German

attempts at “elastic defense” (although the German generals unanimously insist that elastic defense was not truly implemented).

The salient thrust is attempted where the hostile force is inferior and where deep penetration can be made without fear of a counter-blow adequate to encircle the advance thrust, and where there are no heavily fortified positional defense lines to be broken by the usual “crushing blow” and subsequent turning of the flanks with the aim of envelopment, encirclement, and annihilation.

Blitzkrieg, or lightning war, is characterized as an “adventurist strategy” (i.e., one not taking adequate account of the relation of forces).^{*} “Stalinist insight was necessary in order to tell the world that the Hitlerite plan of lightning war’ was to the core adventurist....”²⁴ As Major General Isayev described it:

The German blitzkrieg strategy in the second world war was essentially the strategy of the invading echelon. Everything was subordinated to this adventurist and hazardous idea. The echelon of invasion was the most characteristic feature of German strategy. All the forces were concentrated in the invading echelon. The strategic arrangement of the German armies in the theatre of war was therefore in the main of the single-echelon type (nearly all the armies in one echelon). Hence the strategic arrangement of the German armed forces was merely a variant of the obsolete (as the war proved) linear strategy.²⁵

^{*} The only exception, to this author’s knowledge, was Frunze’s statement in 1925 that “we do not by any means have to reject the strategy of a lightning blow” (Frunze, *Izbrannye Proizvedenie*, p. 70). He continues in this passage to explain that this strategy would be appropriate if the “class contradictions in the enemy’s country” were particularly sharp. The subsequent conclusion that world revolution would rely *primarily* on Soviet arms led to the complete rejection of this strategy. His reference to a “lightning war” preceded the German conception of blitzkrieg.

The record of Soviet use of the salient thrust indicates a healthy awareness of the need for strong reserves and a powerful penetration force (although they were not always successful, even when vastly superior). Soviet claims to originality of “the salient thrust” and dis-association of it from any relation of the blitzkrieg can hardly be taken at face value. As indicated above, Soviet doctrine may in some ways exercise more caution in the use of the blunter crushing blow. If there is a distinction, the salient thrust, rather than the rapier thrust of the blitzkrieg, is an adaptation of the blunt, mass crushing blow to situations in which this massive shock force is not necessary, and in which the momentum of the offensive is better maintained by stressing mobility more than mass, but still combining both.

Double Envelopment and Encirclement

The aim of all offensive maneuvers is the annihilation of the hostile armed forces. The most effective way to achieve this is considered to be through encirclement of the enemy followed by his annihilation in detail. Encirclement is usually a consequence of envelopment or preferably of a double envelopment. All other offensive maneuvers are also directed toward the ultimate encirclement and annihilation of the enemy.

Contrary to the assumptions of a number of Western military commentators, the Soviets did not “borrow” the idea of encirclement from the onslaughts of the German foe. Although there were few opportunities to encircle prior to Stalingrad, the idea was firmly imbedded in Soviet military doctrine long before the war. The 1936 *Field Regulations* stressed many times that

In the attack, the enemy must be encircled and annihilated.

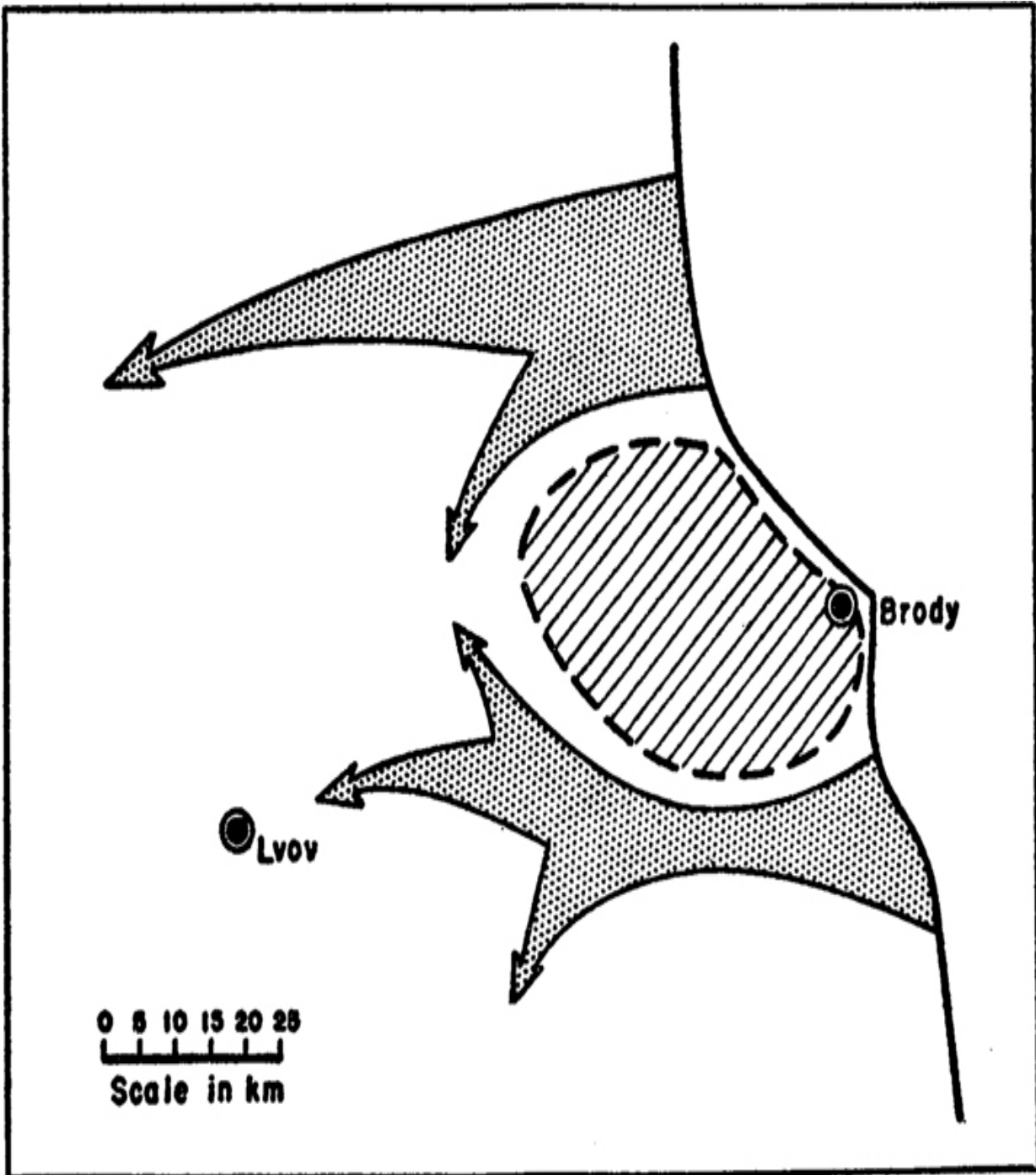
The enemy must be pinned down in the entire depth of his position, encircled and destroyed.

Contemporary means of suppression, in the first order tanks, artillery, aviation and mechanized attack, applied on a large scale, give the possibility to organize simultaneous attack on the entire depth of the enemy's battle order, with the aim of its isolation, complete encirclement and annihilation.

The plan of attack both for an offensive on the enemy's flank and in a breakthrough, must pursue the target not squeezing it out, but by encirclement and annihilation of the manpower, and seizure of the materiel, of the enemy.^{[26](#)}

Double envelopment, or concentric maneuver,^{*} is stressed as a main means of encirclement: “The crown of envelopment or flanking is encirclement and annihilation of the enemy.”^{[27](#)} Concentric maneuver is said to have been used in 1942 in the Stalingrad, Voronezh-Kastornensky, and Northern Caucasus operations; in 1943 at Orel and in the Donbas; in 1944 in the breakout from Leningrad and in clearing the Crimea; and in 1945 at Berlin.^{[28](#)}

^{*} The term “concentric maneuver” apparently means double envelopment. It was first used, to this writer's knowledge, by Tukhachevsky (*Vona Klassov*, 1921, p. 106).



[The Encirclement at Brody \(July 16-23, 1944\)](#)
This operation by the First Ukrainian Front illustrates encirclement by double envelopment. Five German divisions were encircled and subsequently annihilated in this operation. (Based on a Soviet General Staff map)

The Soviet double envelopments of 1943 to 1945 were usually effected by vastly superior forces (as high as seven to one as early as 1943), but not always without significant escape of the enemy. As Colonel Ely (USA) noted,

“The Red Army never paralleled the feats of the German units, which sometimes actually surrounded Red Army forces larger than their own and annihilated them.”^{29*} In addition to such notable failures of 1941 and 1942 as the attempted Soviet double envelopments at Bobruisk and Kharkov (where, in each case, one arm continued to its doom after the other had been repulsed), as late as January, 1945, both Konev’s and Zhukov’s double envelopments in Poland closed with the enemy already withdrawn from the area.

* This author agrees with Ely on the importance this maneuver plays in Soviet doctrine, although Ely tends to depart from Soviet differentiation and to regard double envelopment and encirclement as being synonymous. Ely, in this author’s judgment, is correct in contending that the Soviet commander is under special pressure to apply double envelopment in open warfare.

Encirclement is also sought where double envelopment is not practicable. Thus: “In all cases of unfavorable circumstances for him, the enemy will strive to deny his annihilation. In order that he cannot do this, it is necessary to encircle him. If the enemy does not have open flanks, it is necessary from the beginning to break through his disposition, and creating open flanks by this means, to outflank, envelop, and encircle him.”³⁰

The operations of 1943-1945 included a number of very significant encirclements: Stalingrad (22 enemy divisions encircled), Korsun-Shevchenkivskyi (over 10 divisions), the Berezina area (10 divisions), Jassy-Kishinev (22 divisions), Budapest (10 to 13 divisions), Berlin (over 13 divisions), the Minsk area (about 11 divisions), Bobruisk (5 divisions), Vitebsk (5 divisions), northwestern Latvia (10 divisions), and East Prussia (about 12 divisions).³¹

Major General Beliaev has discussed several of these operations in detail. According to Soviet figures, in the Korsun-Shevchenkivskyi operation, of the 75,000 men originally encircled, 55,000 were killed, 18,000 were taken prisoner, and only 2000 officers escaped (were flown out by the Germans). In the Minsk operation, of the 107,000 men encircled, 72,000 were killed and 35,000 taken prisoner. At Stalingrad, in Beliaev’s words, “the ideal qualitative and quantitative indices of the liquidation of an encircled group were achieved.” On January 10, 1943, the date of the commencement of the “liquidation” of the pocket, 250,000 men were encircled (of the originally encircled 330,000); by February 2, 1943, of this number 120,000 were “annihilated” and 130,000 taken prisoner.³²

Stalingrad is, of course, the most spectacular example: “The history of warfare holds no parallel to such a maneuver of encirclement and the

destruction of so large a concentration of regular troops armed to saturation point with every modern weapon. In scope and results the Red Army's Stalingrad operation far surpassed anything previously known in military history...."³³ The Soviets have compared their use of encirclement with historical precedents. As both Major General Isayev and Marshal Voroshilov wrote: "For centuries Hannibal's operation at Cannae was considered the pinnacle of the art of warfare. But since 1942, that pinnacle is not Cannae, but Stalingrad."³⁴ Major General Korkodinov also made this comparison and brought out what Soviet theory considers to be the essential difference and Stalinist improvement: annihilation by a *series* of operations instead of a single, all-encompassing one. He wrote:

High tempo and the possibility of dealing a deep blow permit attainment of the decisive aim—complete annihilation of the enemy. This aim in the whole extent of military history has been most completely attained with preliminary encirclement of the hostile forces. The realization of "Cannae" was always the ideal of strategists striving for the decisive aims in war. Therefore, encirclement and annihilation of the major forces was a very frequent phenomenon, and in those cases where it succeeded, it created extremely favorable conditions for the encircler, especially if he had a great (two or three times) numerical superiority.

In distinction to the past, the Fatherland War, beginning at Stalingrad and ending in Berlin, represented a complicated series of operations crowned by the encirclement and annihilation of large groups of German-Fascist troops, although many of these operations (Stalingrad in their number) were conducted without [general] superiority of forces over the enemy.³⁵

Others, like Major General Fomichenko, have stressed the contrast to German military art but have omitted any reference to the more spectacular German encirclements in 1941. Fomichenko continued: "The encirclement of German troops and the annihilation of all who refused to lay down their arms has become a feature of the Red Army's operations. Soviet commanders have learned to combine sober calculation with risk."³⁶

The maneuver of encirclement has been extolled in the postwar years because of the great success with which it was used by the Red Army and because it is considered to be the most effective means of annihilating the enemy. Voroshilov described it in the following passage, in which he denies that the Germans had used this maneuver successfully:

In the course of the last war the German fascist command sought many times, but without success, to carry out a strategic maneuver of this kind against Soviet troops. In the offensive operations of the Soviet Army this strategic encircling maneuver became the principal form of its battle action.³⁷

A General Staff group studying the operations of 1944 concluded that “the best and most swift means of defeating hostile groupings is their complete encirclement and consequent annihilation. The ideal of the greatest strategists of all epochs was the realization of an offensive engagement in the encirclement of the enemy troops.”³⁸

Wartime and postwar regulations also indicate the basic characteristics of encirclement and the stress placed on it. The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated:

When successful a battle of encirclement leads to the complete destruction of the enemy.

The encirclement and destruction of the enemy in the face of his equal or lesser forces is a matter of honor, valor, and heroism of the troops and of the highest military art of commanders, and should be looked upon as the highest feat of war.³⁹

Such an emotional appeal is made in the *Regulations* for no other form of maneuver. The 1944 *Field Regulations* made the further statement that

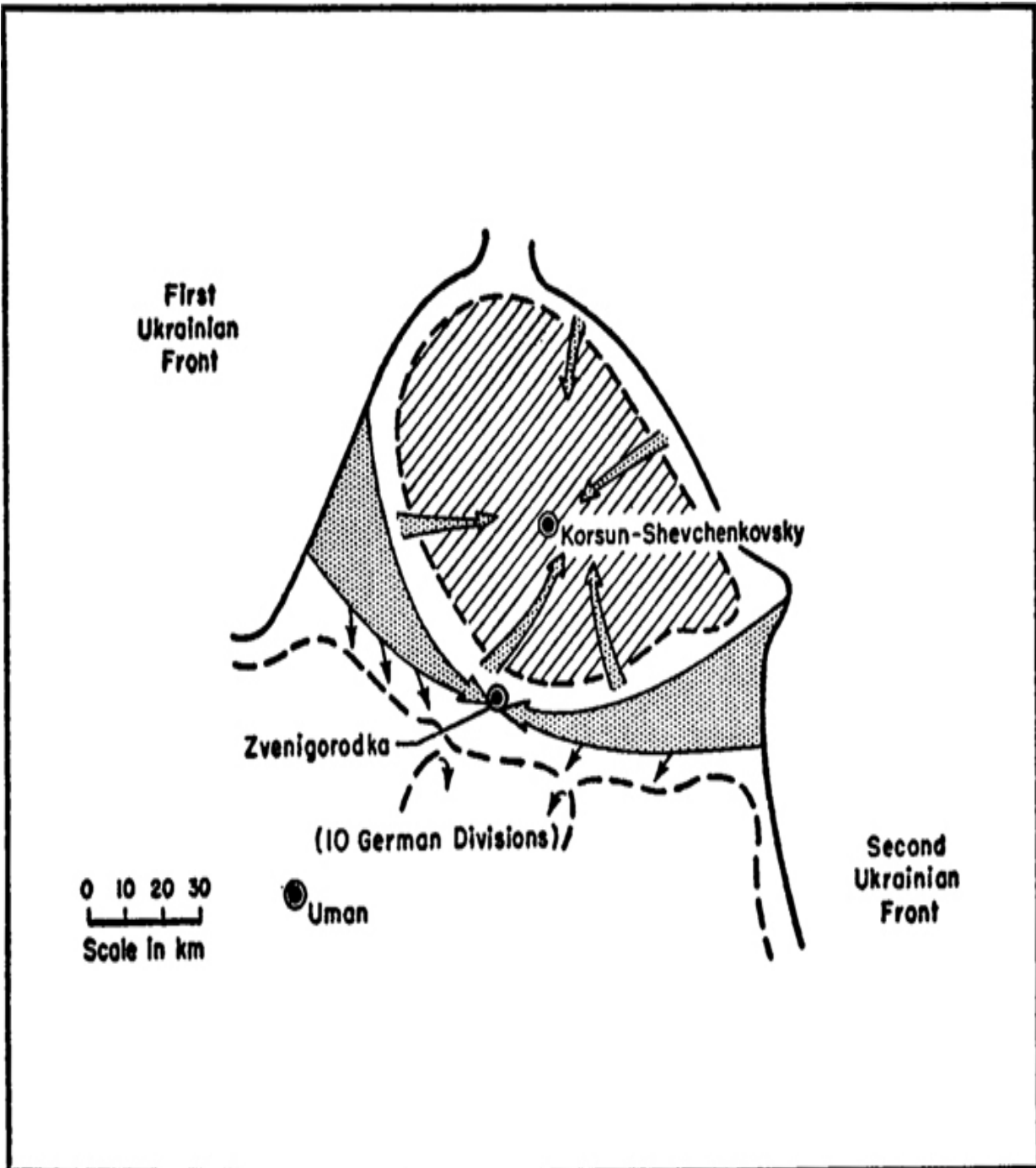
The guiding idea of battle to the annihilation of an encircled enemy is the subsequent splintering of his units with the aim of squeezing small encircled groups into a close area and putting them under crossfire of machine guns and mortars.⁴⁰

Major General Talensky described four main factors in an encirclement operation:

- (a) A decisive breakthrough of the enemy defenses in two or more places.
- (b) A rapid advance and maneuver of mobile units.
- (c) Encirclement of the enemy's main groupings.
- (d) Destruction of the encircled enemy.⁴¹

Lt. General Yarchevsky analyzed “The Encirclement Operation” in 1945, in the light of the experience of the Red Army in the Soviet-German war (especially at Jassy-Kishinev, where he had personal experience), from the standpoint of the “inner” and “outer” perimeters or rings [*krugi*] of the encircling force.⁴² In introducing this subject, he stated that “it is intended to show that there are a number of regularities in this matter which make it possible to base many things, already in the preparatory stage, on strict calculations, instead of leaving them to chance... He mentioned Roman counter-vallation and circumvallation lines and stated that “A certain resemblance in regard to essence, tasks, and objectives may be found between

the inner and outer perimeters of modern encirclement operations and the elements which characterized the so-called siege wars of the past.” However, “modern” signifies post-Stalingrad, and even Cannae was “only an irresistible inner perimeter.” The purpose of the inner perimeter is to contain and destroy the encircled foe; the outer one exists to repulse hostile counterblows and relief attempts and to destroy any breakthrough of the inner perimeter. Yarchevsky posed the question of the relation between these perimeters and the determination of how best to distribute forces between them.⁴³ More concretely, he discussed this matter in relation to several significant encirclement operations. Stalingrad went through three phases of the concentration of forces: first on the inner perimeter; then on the outer, to ward off relief attempts; and finally on the inner, “for the purpose of liquidating the surrounded enemy.” In the Korsun-Shevchenkovsky operation, simultaneous blows were dealt on both perimeters. In the Jassy-Kishinev and Bobruisk operations, the concentration



The Encirclement at Korsun-Shevchenkivskyi (February 3-14, 1944)

The forces of the First and Second Ukrainian fronts joined at Zvenigorodka to encircle about 10 German divisions. To the south, another 10 German divisions sought to relieve them, forcing division of the Soviet troops between the "inner" and "outer" perimeters. (Based on a Soviet General Staff map)

was first on pushing the outer perimeter far out, then pressing on the inner. The Jassy-Kishinev, Stalingrad, and Bobruisk experiences are said to point out the importance of a wide zone between perimeters (it was pushed to 100

kilometers in the Jassy-Kishinev case). In the Jassy-Kishinev operation, aviation, infantry, and artillery were predominantly used on the inner perimeter, and tank, mechanized, and cavalry formations used on the outer (because they had more opportunity there for exploiting their advantages of mobility and maneuverability). In the Korsun-Shevchenkovsky operation, the perimeters were very close together, with limitations on maneuver, but also with advantages in rapid shifts of forces from one to the other.

In summation, Yarchevsky concluded that

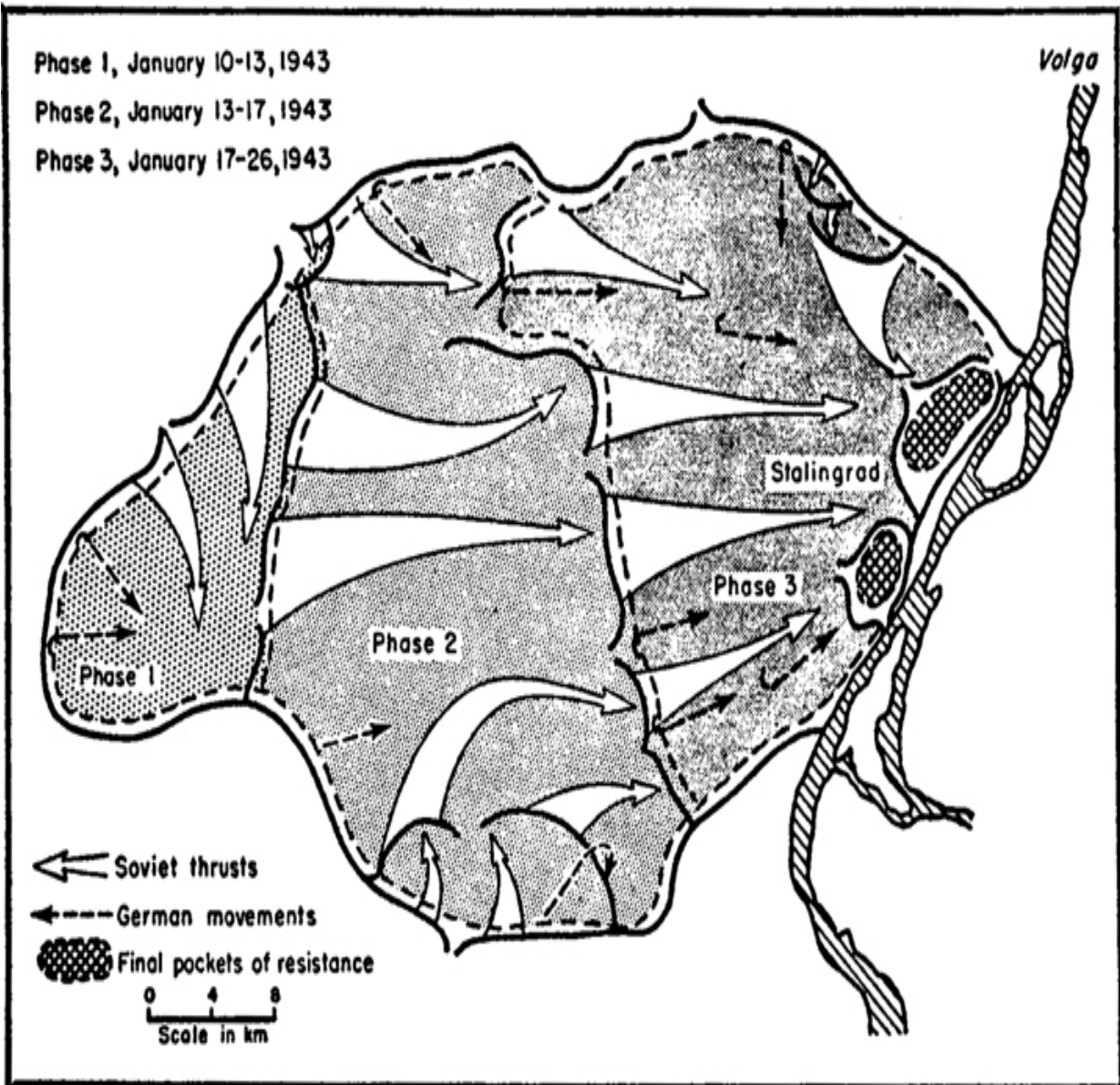
The establishment of an inner and an outer perimeter constitutes an indispensable element in modern encirclement operations, executed in a situation characterized by continuous saturated fronts.... The outer front is not always continuous ... in most cases, the inner encirclement ring will have a continuous tactical front.

What is the relation of forces at the outset of the operation; how may our enemy forces grow in its course; what counteraction may be expected on the part of the encircled group and from outer directions, what is the nature of the terrain in the area of the operation in respect to favorable lines for the outer and inner perimeters—these are the basic, ponderable facts which must be considered when deciding the question of where and how to establish the outer and inner perimeters and the minimum width of the zone between them.^{[44](#)}

Yarchevsky pointed out that

Mobile units (tanks, mechanized, and cavalry) play an important and specific role in modern encirclement operations. They can quickly close the bag in which the enemy group finds itself, to prevent his slipping away, and rapidly widen the encirclement ring by intercepting important centers in the outer and inner perimeters.^{[45](#)}

The primary role of aviation remains the gaining of the domination of the air, thus securing freedom of maneuver.^{[46](#)} In some cases this was extremely difficult, as the enemy had concentrated his air forces precisely to counter and avoid encirclement (Korsun-Shevchenskovsky and Budapest). Beyond this preliminary necessity, “The suppression and annihilation of encircled troops ... is one of the most important missions of aviation supporting land troops.”^{[47](#)}



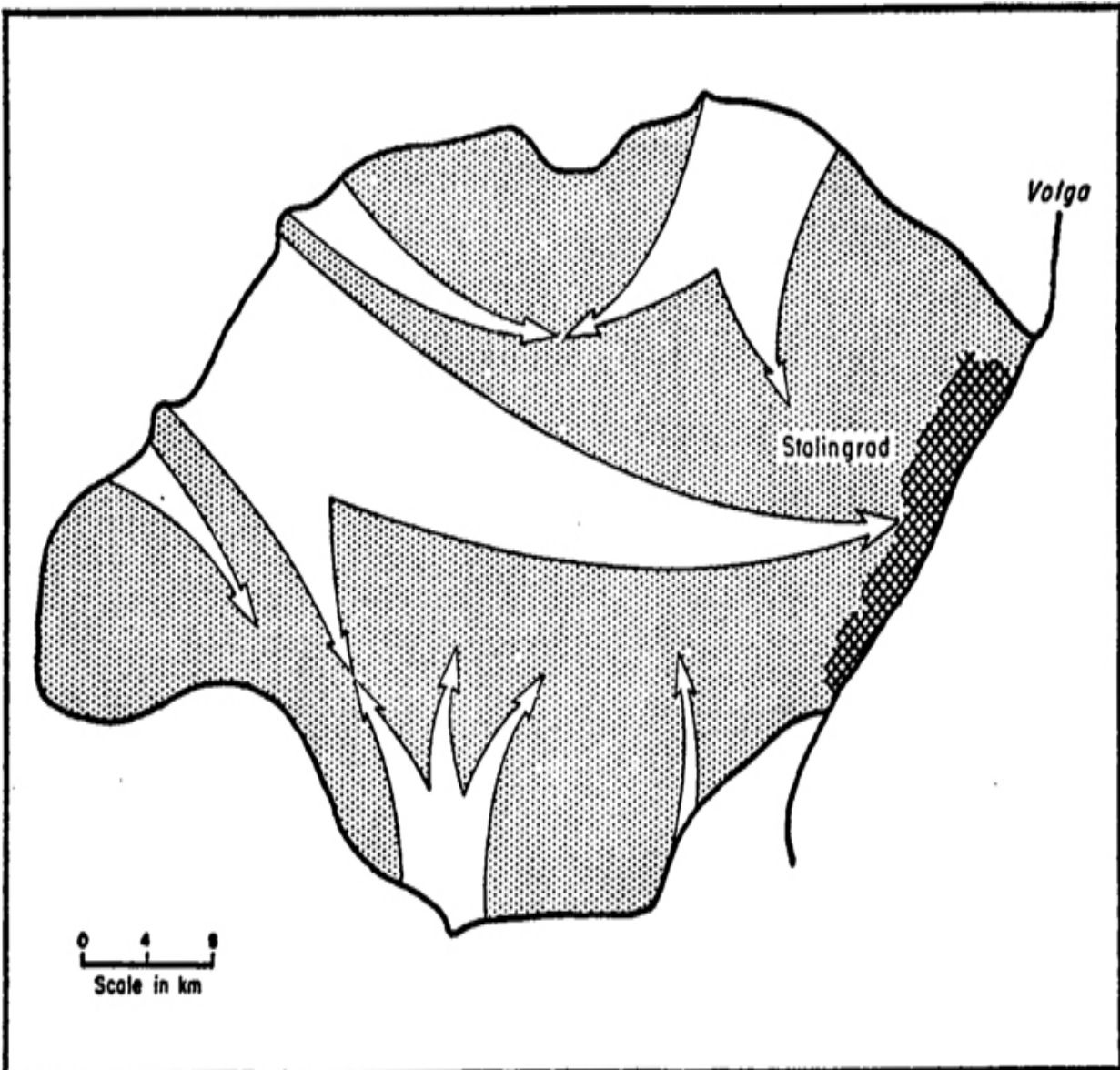
[Liquidation of the Encirclement at Stalingrad](#) - This map is based on a Soviet General Staff historical study of the liquidation of the encirclement at Stalingrad in January, 1943. It should be compared with the following map, which represents a Soviet *instructional* picture of the same operation.

The liquidation of the encircled enemy forces by the inner perimeter was the subject of analysis by another Soviet general, Major General Beliaev. He wrote in 1946:

The liquidation of encircled troops is the consummation of the maneuver of encirclement. Operations based on the maneuver of encirclement, even though having general success, without the [total] liquidation of the encircled grouping do not have the right to be considered successful particularly as operations of encirclement. The liquidation of the encircled grouping is, consequently,

not only the consummation of the operation of encirclement, but also the criterion for defining the completeness of its success.^{[48](#)}

One aspect of the liquidation of hostile encircled groups is a steady squeezing of the area encircled. Thus, Beliaev stated that in the Stalingrad operation, on January 10, 1943, the average radius of the ring of encirclement was 27 kilometers; on January 13, 22 kilometers; on January 17, 16 kilometers; and on January 21, 13 kilometers.^{[49](#)} At Jassy-Kishinev, liquidation commenced immediately; in the Stalingrad and Korsun-Shevchenkovsky operations, only after some time had elapsed. The other aspect of the Soviet doctrine on the liquidation of encirclements is the stress on splintering the encircled force and annihilating it in detail, rather than compressing it into a more compact and perhaps more viable combat organization.^{[50](#)}



[Liquidation of the Encirclement at Stalingrad - II](#)
 This map is based on a Soviet *misleading* diagram illustrating the doctrine of liquidating an encirclement. The example, Stalingrad in January, 1943, should be compared with the previous map, which is an official Soviet *historical* map of this operation. Modifications of the actual operation are intended to render this map nearer to the Soviet “model” for liquidating an encirclement.

This predilection for encircling the enemy is seen in the reference to certain combat actions by this term, almost by analogy. Thus, “The plan of combined operations of a naval landing with the air must be established on a calculation of the encirclement and complete annihilation of the foe.”⁵¹ And in another case, it was stated that “Parachutists and airborne infantry divisions are troops encircling [the enemy] from a vertical direction.”⁵²

The aim of encirclement and destruction of the enemy force in detail is, of course, a standard military objective. While there is not sufficient evidence to determine whether Soviet military practice is in fact distinctive in its stress on this objective, the strong Soviet verbal emphasis is very interesting in view of the significant place this maneuver occupies in the Bolshevik political doctrine and strategy. Encirclement, as a form of isolation of part of the hostile force from the main enemy center (in both the command and geographic senses), is comparable to the political strategy of attempting to isolate potential or actual parts of the enemy coalition. Annihilation of the enemy is thus accomplished by neutralizing part of the enemy while another part is destroyed; in the military maneuver of encirclement, it consists in holding the main enemy force at bay by the outer perimeter while destroying the lesser hostile group by the inner perimeter. Similarly, any encircled (isolated) group is splintered and destroyed in detail. This ideological concern with encirclement is, as in other aspects of Bolshevik thought, double edged. In addition to, and probably contributing to, the Soviet aggressive pursuit of this aim is a fear of being encircled. The great attention paid for so many years to the “capitalist encirclement” is propaganda, but it is probably more than that. Of course, in 1941 a capitalist power (by Soviet definition) did assault Russia. Similarly, in both political and military strategy, great effort is made to safeguard their own unity and simultaneously to splinter the enemy and destroy him in detail; politically, their aim is to isolate and dominate one nation or area at a time, gradually, rather than to risk all in an open offensive aimed at world conquest.

Attacks on the Flanks and Rear

Similar considerations affect the Soviet sensitivity regarding flank and rear attacks. Soviet doctrine lays strong emphasis on both the security of its own flanks and rear and the striking of the enemy’s rear and flanks. Deep concern with regard to striking the enemy’s flanks has already been seen in Civil War experience. Colonel Vorob’ev described how “Attempts to deal flank blows, to enter the rear, and to encircle characterized the decisions and actions of our troops.”⁵³ And in a discussion on cavalry tactics in 1923, one writer stated: “Times change, and forms change; only this truth remains immutable: that

cavalry in all cases of its action must seek the flanks and rear of the enemy.”⁵⁴ In 1919, Stalin issued a combat order declaring: “The main thing of which we must cure the troops is the fear of open spaces on their flanks.”⁵⁵ The 1944 *Field Regulations* still “require special attention to be directed to securing flanks and sector joints...” Other Soviet sources contain similar statements.⁵⁶

The German High Command was aware of this strong concern, and its secret *Leaflet on the Peculiarities of Russian Methods of Combat* stated: “In consequence of the great sensitiveness of the Russian flank, great attention is given to junction with adjoining units and to flank and rear protection.”⁵⁷

The same concern for the flanks is exhibited in Soviet actions against the enemy. In 1919 Stalin ordered the commanders to whom he was writing to “Fulfill the tasks assigned not by advancing columns, but by dealing flank blows on the main force of the enemy.... Pay special attention to the expedient utilization of cavalry for blows on the flanks and rear of the enemy, concentrating it in strong units on the flanks....”⁵⁸ The 1936 *Field Regulations* laid the basis for this in Soviet military doctrine:

Open flanks and sector joints are the more vulnerable place in defense. It is necessary to search by all means for open flanks with the aim of attacking them expediently, considering that an open flank is a transitory phenomenon.⁵⁹

In his commentary on these regulations, Tukhachevsky stressed the fact that “The new *Field Regulations* ascribe exceptionally great significance to flanking. Units must study this aspect of combat actions constantly.”⁶⁰ This maneuver continued to be stressed during the recent war.⁶¹

A special use of flank attacks is for destroying an enemy wedge or envelopment attempt. Colonel Korotkov described this as follows: “The Soviet Command is countering the German tactic of wedges and pincers by the tactic of flank blows. It is applying the method of crushing one side of the wedge, as a result of which the other side loses its force....”⁶² The Germans recognized this. In describing Soviet combat peculiarities to their troops (in 1941), the Germans stated: “Constantly, even in the smallest actions, advantage is taken of every opportunity offered for flanking, envelopment, attacks on the flank and rear, yet never without [also] holding the enemy in the front.”⁶³ General Haider, Chief of the German General Staff, noted in his diary on August 7, 1941, that the Soviet tactic of flank jabs was having some effect in dictating German operations and warned against this.⁶⁴

The early flanking and envelopment failures of the Soviet Army were not owing to unawareness of the advantages of these maneuvers, but rather to excessive concern with them and failure to weigh adequately the conditions before attempting to apply them. The Soviet attempts to explain this are naturally quite rare; usually no mention is made of these failures. Lt. General Shilovsky, however, noted them and attempted to explain them:

Because of the limited quantity of mobile troops at their disposal, and also the lack of experience in complex maneuvers which they had, the maneuver of envelopment took time and did not always give decisive results. Even when it had succeeded in encircling the opponent, the weakness of the enveloping units often prohibited the realization of the complete destruction of the hostile troops.⁶⁵

A number of outstanding examples of flank blows by the Red Army could be given. In addition to the offensive operations of 1943-1945, there were several notable flank and rear attacks by cavalry forces in 1941 and 1942. Cavalry was, of course, especially adapted for independent action in the rear and on the flanks because of its mobility and its ability to achieve the unexpected under conditions of terrain and climate where armor was restricted.

In addition to attacks on the German rear by flank penetrations and envelopment, tactical infiltration under cover of night was also effectively used. The Germans had realized that the Soviets would seek to strike their rear by all means but underestimated the danger from infiltration. The official guidance pamphlet of 1941 explained that "Action is carried on in the rear of their enemy ... by small detachments which filter through gaps in the front and attack isolated individuals as well as small detachments..."⁶⁶ Infiltration actually reached far greater proportions and was used in some cases for surprise rear attacks by entire units up to regimental size.

Other methods of attacking the hostile flanks and rear were also employed. Chief among these were partisan warfare and airborne and amphibious operations. (The latter are considered by the Soviets to be "flanking" operations.)

Meeting Engagements

The meeting engagement, or encounter [*vstrechnyi boi*], is recognized by Soviet doctrine as being “a special independent type of combat characterized by special conditions of its origin and development, and the means of its organization and conduct.”⁶⁷

The 1936 *Field Regulations* set forth the Soviet doctrine on conduct in meeting engagements:

A meeting engagement is characterized by rapid deployment of troops from march formation to battle order, and immediate attack on the enemy there where he is met ... a meeting engagement must be conducted to encirclement and annihilation.⁶⁸

And the 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated: “Meeting engagements are characterized by ambiguity, sharp and swift changes of the situation, transient military actions, and striving by both sides to seize the initiative.”⁶⁹ These engagements demand considerable initiative and maneuver. Although stress is laid on these principles, the result is not always favorable because of the absence of a “plan” and specific preparation. This handicap applies to all armies in this situation, but is especially limiting in the Soviet Army owing to the usual very low degree of initiative permitted to subordinate commands.

CHAPTER 7

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE

CONCENTRATION AND

ECONOMY OF FORCE

The principles of the concentration of force and of the economy of force are common to all modern military thought. The classical meaning of economy of force, that all forces be most effectively used, has become blurred, and this phrase now often means merely “conservation” of force.¹ In the common recent error it is a corollary of the principle of the concentration of force. Since these terms are similarly confused in both present-day American and Soviet usage, they will be employed here in their customary current uses.* Thus, the U.S. *Field Service Regulations* state: “Concentration of superior forces, both on the ground and in the air, at the decisive place and time, and their employment in a decisive direction, creates the condition essential to victory. Such concentration requires strict economy in the strength of forces assigned to secondary missions.”²

* In Russian these phrases use the plural form, “forces” [*sily*]. This probably does not indicate any difference in essential meaning, although it may stress the material factors.

In Soviet doctrine there is particular emphasis on mass employment of all types of troops as an application of this principle. There is also in Soviet doctrine a strong realization of the more refined meaning of this principle as indicating superiority at the decisive point and time of contact.

Mass

This principle is sometimes termed “the principle of mass,” and although not expressed in this phrase in Soviet doctrine, nowhere would it be more fitting. “Massed fire” is stated to be “the foundation of the operative tactical art of our troops.”³ Voroshilov praised the operations of 1944 as being characterized by “colossal and expertly massed combat materiel in the necessary directions.”⁴ And Stalin is credited with the creation of this age-old principle by reference to a Civil War order “not to break up your forces, but strike in the selected direction in concentration.”⁵

Military “mass” is not always regarded as (or perhaps admitted to be) mere saturation. Major General Subbotin wrote: “Massing is not a simple collection of forces and means. In concentrating them, the command must carefully plan the sequence or simultaneity of their commission in strictly combined action at each stage of the operation.”⁶ The general rule, as stated by *General Tactics*, is the simultaneous use of all available forces (except regular reserves):

It is exceptionally important to deal the enemy a *concentrated blow*, which consists of a *simultaneous blow* on the enemy by aviation, artillery, tanks, and infantry, as in differently timed blows the enemy could repulse them in turn.⁷

The main elements of the concentration of forces are compactness and quantity. The following quotation is one indication of the former; the latter will be seen below in concrete data from the experience of the Soviet-German war. Thus, “It is necessary to concentrate one’s means of firepower and manpower, securing a decisive superiority over the enemy in the main direction, and in no case to permit their scattering.”⁸

It has been explicit in Soviet doctrine since the 1936 *Field Regulations* that infantry must be used in mass, or, as it is sometimes stated by the Soviets (very aptly), “in saturation.” These regulations read:

Infantry must be so saturated that it can with the support of tanks and aircraft conclusively annihilate elements of the opponent in the entire depth of his defense disposition; on the other hand, the surplus [*izlishka*] of infantry saturation in no way itself necessitates unjustified losses.⁹

A wartime guide to the translation of the principle into field quantities, at the tactical level, provided the information that an infantry company could cover 250 meters’ width of front in the offensive; a battalion, 650 meters; and a regiment, 1650 meters (exclusive of tactical reserves).¹⁰

Artillery is employed in mass, and the concentration of artillery guns has consistently increased. As Col. General Kazakov recently (1951) declared, “Soviet artillery has always made use of the principle of great concentration of fire....”¹¹ Since 1942 the Soviets have increased artillery concentration by the use of a relatively large Artillery Reserve of the High Command (ARGK), with separate artillery regiments and divisions available for massing in the decisive sectors. This system is estimated by Colonel Ely (USA) to give the Soviets up to five times the firepower of the organic artillery of the United States division, corps, and army.¹² The proportion of artillery to other ground forces in the Soviet Army is relatively very high, Western estimates ranging from 35 to 50 per cent of the Soviet ground forces in the later stages of the war.¹³

The Soviet *Artillery Combat Regulations* of 1937 stipulated a norm of 60 to 80 guns per kilometer of front. On December 1, 1940 (at the height of the Finnish war), the norm was said to be 100 to 150 guns per kilometer; in 1943, 130 to 150 guns; in 1944, 150 to 200 guns; in 1945, 200 to 250 guns; and in 1946, to have reached 250 to 300 guns per kilometer.¹⁴ In major engagements these norms were often exceeded. According to Soviet sources, at Stalingrad the density reached 300 guns per kilometer; at besieged Leningrad, 365 guns; and at Berlin, 670 guns per kilometer (a total of 22,000 artillery pieces).¹⁵ An unusually large proportion of these guns, by Western standards, were employed in a direct-fire role on the front line.¹⁶

Armor is also used in mass. Even the 1936 *Field Regulations* stipulated that the “Use of tanks in the offensive must be in mass,” and this has remained in subsequent regulations.¹⁷ (United States military doctrine and practice is criticized by the Soviets for allegedly failing to recognize the importance of using tanks in mass, it being stated that they were used in Europe only by divisions, and in the Pacific only by battalions).¹⁸ Especially after the battle of Stalingrad, the Soviets used tanks in mass. At Stalingrad, the concentration reached over 40 tanks per mile.¹⁹ The largest Soviet concentration of tanks was at Berlin, where allegedly from 4000 to 6300 were massed.²⁰

Aviation is also used in mass, where possible. In addition to indicating the tactical role of the air force, the 1936 *Field Regulations* stated this explicitly:

Aviation is used to strike those targets which cannot be overcome by the fire of the infantry, artillery, and other types of troops. For the achievement of maximum battle success the WS [Army

Air Force] must be used *in mass*, concentrating efforts in time and on targets having the most tactical significance.²¹

According to Col. General Khriukin, “The mass use of the VVS in the direction of the main blow must be placed at the foundation of any decision of the aviation command.”²² Colonel Kariakin has been quoted as stating three roles for the mass use of aviation:

- (a) The intensive massing of aviation on a narrow sector of the front fully justifies the required energy and means, for it creates the maximum favorable situation for the annihilation of the enemy by land means, and for seizing his strongly fortified defense lines and supporting points.
- (b) Concentration of aviation for massed blows demands a particularly thorough organization and clear-cut planning of combat operations. With such an approach, the operations present no difficulties.
- (c) Massed blows must under no circumstances be limited to any given number and time of flights [sorties], but must be kept up until the basic task is resolved—the breakthrough of the enemy defense through its entire depth.²³

Official Soviet data are available on several outstanding air force operations. The most extreme tactical bombing concentration prior to Berlin is said by Col. General Khriukin to have been in East Prussia, being 927 tons on a 9-kilometer front (as part of a larger operation, with a total of 1757 tons on a 27-kilometer front).²⁴ Königsberg was subjected to 10,000 sorties and 5000 tons of bombs in 48 hours on April 7-8, 1945.²⁵ At Stalingrad, 34,408 sorties were flown during September and October, 1942.²⁶ The climax was the battle of Berlin, where it was usually claimed that a total of 8400 Soviet aircraft, flying 70,000 combat sorties, participated in the operation. (It seems that the Soviets went all out to achieve new statistical records in the battle of Berlin. One Soviet source, however, stated that the number of Soviet aircraft used was from 4000-5000, rather than 8400).²⁷ In all, the Soviet air forces are said to have flown a total of 3 million sorties during the war.

Former Soviet air force officers who participated in the battles of Moscow (autumn, 1941) and Stalingrad (late 1942-early 1943) have asserted (in interviews with the author) that, at least in these two important engagements, the Soviet command employed numbers of obsolete aircraft in addition to all

available effective warplanes in order to gain a greater quantitative superiority. This is an indication of the extent to which concentration of mass is sought.

It should be noted that although the prewar (1936 and 1940) *Field Regulations* required use of artillery, tanks, and aviation “in mass,” in actual practice this was not accomplished until the latter half of the war. In part, this was due to the extremely heavy materiel losses of the initial months of the war.

Some German comments on the Soviet application of the principle of mass may throw this matter into better perspective. These comments were made after the war by a high German military source:

The most common Russian form of combat was the use of mass. Human mass and mass of materiel were generally used unintelligently and without variation, but *they were always effective*.

The Russians repeated the same tactics again and again: employment of masses, and narrow division sectors held by large complements replenished time after time. Therefore, also the mass attacks. In the twinkling of an eye the terrain in front of our line teemed with Russian soldiers. They seemed to grow out of the earth, and nothing would stop their advance for a while. Gaps closed automatically, and the mass surged on until the supply of men was used up and the wave, substantially thinned, receded again. How often we witnessed this typical picture of a Russian attack! *It is impressive and astounding*, on the other hand, *how frequently the mass failed to recede, but rolled on and on, nothing able to stop it*. Repulsing such an attack was certainly dependent on the strength of our own forces and means for defense; primarily, however, it was a question of nerves. Only seasoned soldiers mastered the fear which instinctively gripped everyone upon the onslaught of such masses.²⁸

German accounts of an awe-inspiring or “invincible” “steam roller” were doubtless in part a convenient means of explaining defeat, but may in part have been justified by Soviet practice. This same high German military source remarked that 1943 marked “a definite change in the method of attack. Concentrated artillery barrages were employed more frequently and were supplemented by massed mortar attacks,” and that “The employment of massed tanks brought about a revolutionary change in Russian tactics in 1944.”²⁹

Colonel Ely (USA) also pointed out examples of the Soviet use of mass. To cite but one of a number of examples: in late 1942, on the Volkhov front, 15 to 18 Soviet divisions with trebled artillery strength took 1 month to prepare an attack on an enveloped German force only one-fourth of their size.³⁰

Decisive Superiority

Mere density of mass is but part of the Soviet conception; it is recognized that concentration of forces must be directed in the decisive (correct) direction and at the decisive (correct) time. This is a principle of Bolshevik political action as well; as Lenin once declared: “It is necessary to collect a great preponderance of forces [*pereves sil*] at the decisive point, and at the decisive moment.”³¹ In 1921, Tukhachevsky repeated this maxim of military science as being also applicable in the “war of classes.”³²

The Soviets presume that one *cannot* fight with equal force everywhere, that there must be a main effort creating a superiority of forces at the decisive moment and place. The 1936 and subsequent *Field Regulations* declare:

To fight everywhere with the same force is impossible. To obtain success it is necessary to gain a decisive superiority over the enemy in the main direction by means of a regrouping of forces and means. At secondary points only forces to cover the enemy are needed.

... offensive combat requires the coordination of the greatest forces and means, and securing of overwhelming superiority [*podavliaiushchie prevoskhodstvo*] in the direction of the main blow.³³

Stalin is quoted by Colonel Chuvikov as stating that “Concentration of the main forces at the decisive moment on the most vulnerable point” is the basis of correct strategic leadership.³⁴ Restatements of this tenet of doctrine are frequent. To note but one general statement, Major General Korkodinov, in his summary of “the operating art” of the Soviet Army, stated:

Concentration of superior forces in the decisive direction. Numerical superiority in forces over the enemy was always considered the most true means to the achievement of victory, in strategy and in tactics. Actually, in the whole course of military history, victory was won in the majority of cases by the numerically most strong over the weaker.

Possessing equal or even lesser forces than, the enemy, it is possible to gain success by concentrating superior forces in the decisive direction at the decisive moment.

It is important not only to have a superiority of forces at the beginning of the operation, but also to preserve it to the conclusion [*do kontsa*] of the operation, to the complete achievement of the planned aim.³⁵

The prewar *General Tactics* had restated that need for “decisive superiority over the enemy in forces and means in the selected direction of the main blow.” It also stated: “... a general superiority over the enemy cannot be; only a skillful utilization of force in being securing the creation of a

decisive superiority over the enemy in the necessary time and in the decisive direction is possible.”³⁶

The most frequently used example of the concentration of forces in the main direction (decisive point) in Soviet instruction is Stalin-grad. According to Colonel Ely (USA), the Soviets used seven Armies in the encirclement and reduction of Field Marshal von Paulus’ Sixth Army. The Soviets have intentionally permitted their original statement of four Soviet Armies, issued at the time presumably to misinform the Germans on the location of Soviet forces, to stand.³⁷ Soviet accounts usually deny over-all superiority (thus raising the prestige of this most famous operation), but claim proudly a concentration of superior forces in the main directions (thus supporting fulfillment of their doctrine). Major General Korkodinov wrote that at the beginning of the Stalingrad offensive operation the Soviets did not have an over-all numerical superiority over the standing forces of the enemy. However, he stated that the command of the Red Army was able to create a more than double superiority of the striking groups in the direction of the offensive and a yet more significant superiority in “the directions of the main blows” (in artillery, at some sectors, a superiority almost six times as great). “Thus, the art consists in concentrating superior forces in the decisive direction or sectors.”³⁸ According to Major General Zamiatin, Soviet superiority was not general south of Stalingrad (in conflict with German reports). Lt. General Yarchevsky, who said that the over-all forces were approximately equal, spoke of a “steam roller” on the inner perimeter and said that “overwhelming superiority was achieved in the directions of the main blow.” Major General Talensky stated that the Soviets had an over-all superiority of 20 per cent in infantry and from 30 to 50 per cent in artillery, tanks, and aircraft. He then stated that Soviet superiority in the decisive points was two to one in infantry, tanks, and aircraft and almost three to one in artillery.³⁹

Prewar Soviet doctrine called for a minimum superiority of two or three to one in the direction of the main blow;⁴⁰ and when, in a conversation during the war with a Soviet tank brigade commander, Lt. General Martel (UK) informed him that British superiority at El Alamein had been less than two to one, “he was amazed. He considered it a foolish general who would attack with a superiority of less than three to one.”⁴¹ The London *Times* recently stated (in this author’s opinion, probably accurately) that during the Soviet-German war

the Soviets aimed at a six-to-one superiority before launching an offensive and sought a superiority of four to one as the minimum.⁴²

Soviet doctrinal preference is now not only for adequate superiority at the decisive point, but also for general superiority (while retaining concentration in the main direction). As Colonel Pavlenko has written since the war:

Formerly, in the organization of offensive operations in major theatres of combat action, it was not considered absolutely necessary to have a general superiority in forces over the enemy, but merely superiority in the directions of the main blows. The experience of the Great Fatherland War has shown that the organization of operations (other conditions being equal) without a general superiority in forces and means over the enemy cannot give decisive success.⁴³

The decisive point is usually termed “the main blow” [*glavnyi udar*.] This “main blow” is the key concept of application of the principle of the concentration of force in strategic design and deployment of troops. The operational tactic of multiple attacks along a wide front may seem at first to contradict this principle, but in fact it complements it. As Colonel Lavrov explained:

The execution of strategic missions, connected with dealing the crushing defeat to large groups of hostile forces, determines under contemporary conditions not only the usual creation of superiority in the main direction, but in addition, determines opposing the enemy on a wide front by the active operations of the troops, in order to deny the enemy the possibility of maneuvering his forces.⁴⁴

In addition to the function of tying down and deceiving the enemy, certain conditions (such as an attempt at double envelopment) may modify the application of this principle by extending the decisive point to comprise several coordinated thrusts. But even after over one year of war, the Soviet conclusions in the *Theses on Offensive Combat* were that when two blows were being dealt, the main blow must be roughly three times as strong as the supporting one.⁴⁵

World War I practice is criticized by the Soviets because single blows were launched on a narrow front, thus quickly betraying the design and permitting the repulse of the offensive by the enemy’s reserves.⁴⁶ Soviet practice in the Soviet-German war supports their doctrine of a wide frontal offensive containing one or a few main blows. In most cases in which a wide front was attacked, only the key sectors were penetrated, as the Soviets concentrated their major effort there, exercising elsewhere a keen conservation of force.

Determination of the Main Blow

The main blow is the key form of the concentration of force. Determining “the direction [*napravlenie*] of the main blow” is the key problem of strategy. In our earlier discussion of strategy, several lengthy excerpts from Stalin’s article of 1923 on “The Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists” were reproduced. In the present context, it is necessary to note again a fundamental definition of the content of strategic decision which Stalin made in that article, and elsewhere, for strategy in both its political and military forms. He stated:

The plan of strategy is the plan for the organization of the decisive blow in that direction in which the blow can most quickly give the maximum results.

.....

In other words, *to define the direction of the main blow means to predetermine the nature of operations in the whole period of war; to determine nine-tenths of the fate of the entire war.* In this is the task of strategy.^{[47](#)}

This conception of the extreme importance of selecting *the* direction for *the* main blow has been adopted into Soviet military doctrine.^{[48](#)} Generally it is attributed to Stalin’s authorship and genius, although occasionally pre-Soviet precedents are admitted, and in one case it is said that Stalin placed “a new content into that concept.”^{[49](#)} It is, of course, recognized by the Soviets that the determination of the main blow must be made in each concrete situation on the basis of the particular circumstances. Stalin himself made this explicit.^{[50](#)} As Major General Isayev wrote:

Characteristic of J. V. Stalin as military leader is the aim to strike the main blow, not where it happens to be most convenient and easiest to execute, but where the defeat of the enemy is most important from the point of view of the war as a whole, and where it may result in the destruction of the largest number of the enemy’s forces. It was this supreme feature of Stalin’s strategy that predetermined the great victories scored by our Soviet Army in the campaigns of the Great Fatherland War.^{[51](#)}

The conception of a main blow, as we have seen, is the form implementing the principle of the concentration of force. The 1940 *Field Regulations* described this selection of the direction of the main blow as being the fundamental military decision:

In offensive combat the selection of the direction of the main blow is the basic decision. To decide this task for the offensive means to define what aim, what direction, and by what forces and means the main blow will be dealt.

An overwhelming superiority of forces and means must be concentrated in the direction of the main blow.⁵²

And in 1945 Lt. General Zlobin wrote: “Determining the direction of the main blow, the composition of forces and assignment of tasks to the striking groups and the armies which operate in secondary directions, constitute the essence of the decision of the Front commander and represent the basis for the planning of an offensive operation.”⁵³

The important role assigned in Soviet doctrine to the determination of the direction of the main blow is related to the Bolshevik concern with “planning” and thus “controlling” actions. The alternative is either to fall victim to “chance” [*sluchainost*] or, even worse, to be “provoked” into the “dependent” position of merely countering action instituted by enemy initiative. This is shown in the Soviet preference for “activeness”—the offensive, maneuver, and holding the initiative.

Major General Galatinov made the first of these dangers explicit in his monograph on *The Strategic Objective*, where he stated:

“Strategy is the determination of the direction of the main blow”—Stalin. In this the essence of strategy is expressed as the active leadership of operations in the entire theater of military operations. The more complex and varied forms in which war now occurs, the more important is the determination of the center of the main blow of armed forces. Without that, the conduct of war is given up to the arbitrariness of the elements and chance.⁵⁴

But chance is considered even less of a danger than falling into a position of abdicated initiative, of “dependency” by merely countering moves initiated by the enemy. The alternative is planning and carrying through the plan, and the determination of the main blow is considered an essential of military planning.

In Bolshevik political decision-making there is a similar emphasis on selecting the “main link” in any situation. This main link [*glavnoe zveno*] is the key position to be seized or defended Lenin wrote: “The whole art of politics lies in finding the link ... that is most important at the given moment, the one that guarantees command of the whole chain...”⁵⁵ Stalin also spoke of the central importance of “finding at any given moment that particular link in the chain of processes the seizure of which will permit holding the whole

chain and preparing the conditions for gaining strategic successes.”⁵⁶ Applying this directly to the military sphere, Colonel Chuvikov cited the above quotation from Stalin and wrote: “To find the main link in the general chain of battle and, seizing it, to win the engagement and gain strategic success—this is the most important task of the tactical leadership of units in the Red Army.”⁵⁷

As in Bolshevik political decision-making, the determination of the direction of the main blow is based on a calculation of the relation of forces *Vsootnoshenie sill*. This realistic estimate of relative capabilities contributes to answering the question as to where maximum forces should be concentrated, but not in any scientific manner above human error (as the Soviets imply). Another limitation on its use is the fact that wherever the Soviets choose to concentrate superior forces, that place is bound to show a favorable “relation of forces” for the main blow, although it may not necessarily be the best point or time to have selected.⁵⁸ The Soviets have nowhere, at least in material available to this writer, made an official systematic statement of the concrete factors which determine the “forces” to be considered in the making of this crucial decision. There are, however, a number of statements by high Soviet military authorities which mention the primary factors that the Soviets stress in determining the direction of the main blow. These factors are:

- (a) the aim of the engagement (usually the destruction of the main enemy force);
- (b) the capabilities of one’s own force;
- (c) the capabilities and deployment of the hostile forces;
- (f) anticipated enemy counteractions, including the commitment of reserves; and
- (e) the terrain and climatic limitations and opportunities.⁵⁹

When permitted by these factors and compatible with the aim of the operation, the Soviet preference is to strike the main blow at what is estimated to be the enemy’s most vulnerable point.

Economy of Force

As we have seen, beginning with the 1936 *Field Regulations*, Soviet doctrine considers that “It is impossible to strike everywhere with the same force,” and “At secondary points only forces to cover the enemy are necessary.”⁶⁰ In *General Tactics* it is stated that “on the secondary direction are left only strictly limited forces necessary for covering the enemy activities.”⁶¹ Major General Korkodinov stated that the concentration of forces “is connected with an economy of forces in other directions and sectors.”⁶² Lt. General Zlobin similarly wrote: “Decisive superiority in the direction of the main blow is generally achieved by means of a strict economy of forces in secondary directions.”⁶³ Major General Talensky discussed this in the context of defense. Although he asserted strongly that “It was necessary to decide the tasks of defense with the maximum economy of forces,” he also recognized the need for committing enough forces to make defense really active.⁶⁴

In 1942 the Soviet high command withheld its reserves wherever possible for the decisive counteroffensive. This has been discussed before, but it should be noted here as an outstanding example of well-applied conservation of force.

Until 1942 the basic Soviet tactical implementation of their principles of the concentration and economy of forces was the division of front combat troops into two distinct “groups” in both offense and defense: the striking, or shock, group [*udarnaia grupp*a] and the holding, or covering, group [*skovvyvaiushchaia grupp*a’]. The 1936 *Field Regulations* establishing this combat order [*boevoi poriadok*] of troops described their role as follows:

Combat order consists of striking and holding groups, echeloned in depth....

.....

The striking group in offensive battle order is designated for action in the main direction.

.....

The holding group in offensive combat order must engage the troops of the enemy on the secondary direction and by means of attack units not permit him to concentrate efforts against the striking group.

.....

The striking group in defensive combat order annihilates the opponent by counterattacks, bursting through the holding group, and reestablishes the situation.⁶⁵

The 1940 *Field Regulations* and *General Tactics* repeated this distinction but added a reserve as a distinct part of the combat order.* They also clarified the role of these groups in the defense:

The combat order of a rifle division and regiment in defense consists of holding and striking groups and sometimes a reserve. The holding group consists of the first echelon of defense and has as its assignment to hold firmly the zone (sector, region) of the terrain given it. In the holding group in defense is included the basic part of the forces and means. The striking group consists of the second echelon and is disposed behind the holding group. It has as its assignment the annihilation by counterattack of the enemy who has broken through...,⁶⁶

Thus, the holding group was given the mission of economy of force, whereas the striking group represented the concentration of forces in the main direction.

* The role of the operational reserve is discussed in Chapter 11. It should be noted that the reserve was distinct from and additional to the striking and holding groups.

In *General Tactics* this principle was quantified for the division: “The striking group is assigned two-thirds to three-fourths of the infantry—not less than two regiments.... The holding group is

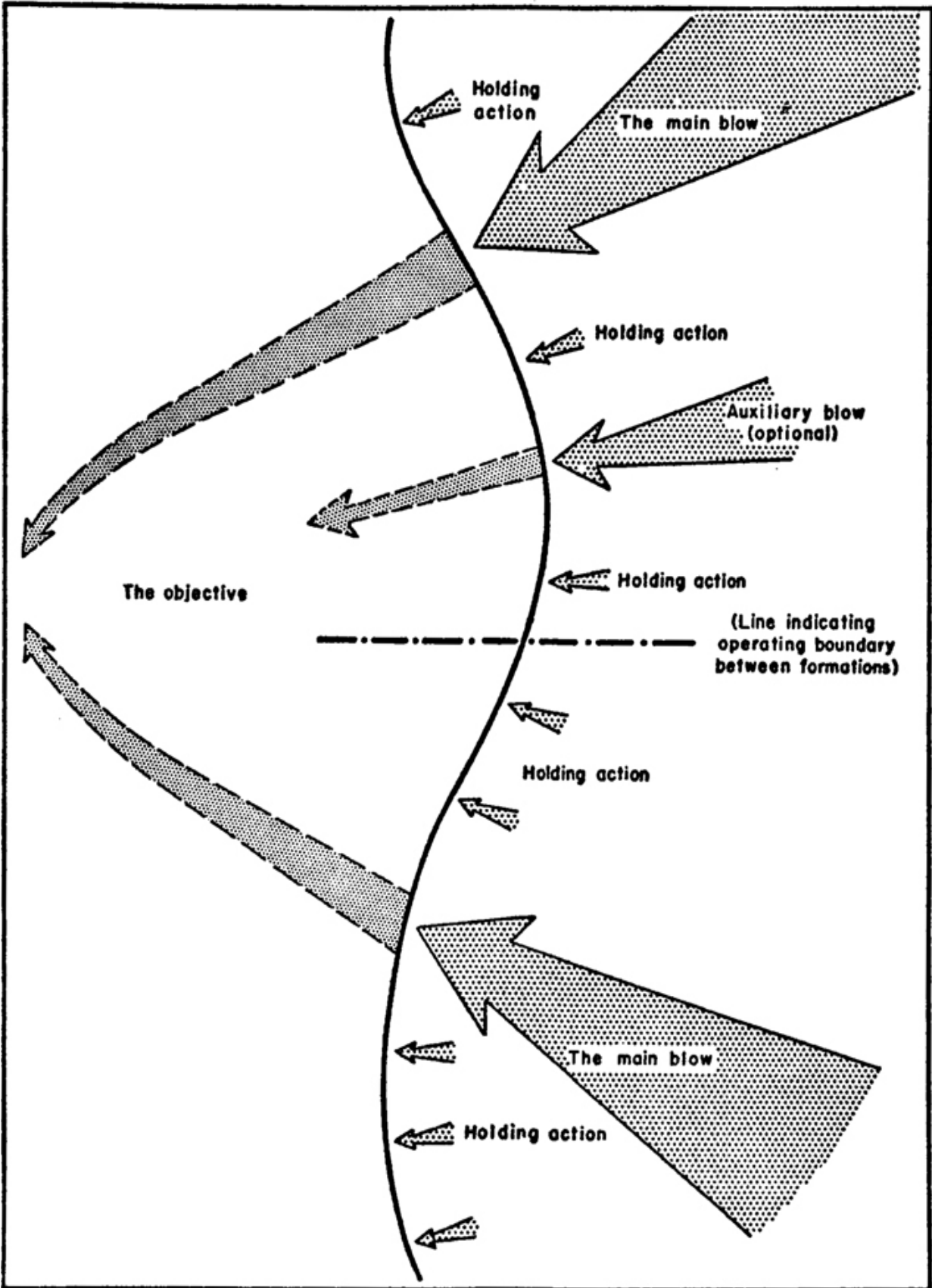


Diagram of the Concentration and Economy of Force in Soviet Doctrine

This diagram illustrates the coordination of two formations, each individually holding to the doctrine of “the main blow,” but together designed to effect a double envelopment.

usually assigned not more than one rifle regiment.”⁶⁷ Another source stated: “The striking group is assigned not less than two-thirds of the force, the holding group one-third of the forces.”⁶⁸ In the air force a parallel can be found, with striking and covering [*prikryvaiush-chaia*] (rather than holding) groups and a reserve. The role of the covering fighter group, located to the upper rear of the striking force, was to offer protective cover.⁶⁹ The size of the striking force is up to three-fourths, and that of the covering group up to one-fourth, of the force.⁷⁰

The early experience of the war showed a great failing in the division of combat forces into striking and holding groups, and they were abolished in 1942 as not sufficiently implementing the principles of concentration and economy of forces. The *Infantry Combat Regulations* of 1942-1945 stated in the preface (which summarizes the changes made from prewar regulations):

The concepts of striking groups and holding groups in the composition of combat formation, as expressed in previous infantry combat regulations, were conducive to inactivity of the holding group in battle.

.....
The present infantry combat regulations abolish the distinction of combat order into striking and holding groups, and demand *concentration of basic forces, means, and strength in the direction of the main blow, and attack by the least possible forces in auxiliary directions.*⁷¹

The 1936 and 1940 *Field Regulations* had also called for the “saturation” of the field of battle with waves of echelons of troops (infantry), the second and third echelons of the striking group developing the gains of the first echelon. This echeloned deployment at and below division level was abolished by the 1942–1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* and the 1944 *Field Regulations*:

The present infantry combat regulations introduce a new combat order. According to the provisions of our former infantry combat regulations, each chain of our forces, from the rifle platoon to the division, organized its own combat order and echeloned densely in depth, with the result that we were saturating the field of battle in its full depth with our manpower, which led to unnecessary losses in personnel and equipment due to fire from enemy aircraft, artillery, and mortars, particularly in the second and subsequent echelons; this *doomed* a significant portion of the strength and firepower of a division ... *to inactivity in battle,** and deprived our forces of the chance to hit the enemy with the full strength of the firepower of their subunits.

The present infantry combat regulations exclude echeloned deployment in depth of combat order in the platoon, company, battalion, regiment, and division. They set down as the basis for the organization of infantry combat order a mandatory requirement: the maximum and simultaneous combat participation of the infantry and its firepower from the beginning to the end of the battle.^{72†}

This does not exclude echeloned formation, especially at corps and army levels, where second and third “operational” echelons (usually mechanized divisions with air and artillery support) are employed.⁷³

* Note the lateral reference to “inactivity” [*bezdeistvie*] as a vice to which in this case certain forces were “doomed” [*obrekat*]. See Chapter 5, pp. 90 and 91, for a discussion of “activity and anti-passivity.” (These italics are mine.) Note also that this is a form of the *classical* meaning of economy of force; i.e., not merely conservation of force, but optimum utilization of forces.

† United States doctrine continues to distinguish between two groupings similar to the former Soviet ones: “In the offensive, troops are distributed into two or more principal tactical groupings: one or more main or decisive attacks in which the greatest possible offensive power is concentrated to bring about a decision, and one or more secondary or holding attacks whose mission is to render maximum assistance to the main attack.” (See *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, FM 100-5, 1944, p. 110, par. 437.)

CHAPTER 8

THE PRINCIPLES OF

MOMENTUM OF ADVANCE AND

OF CONSOLIDATION

The strong pressure inherent in the offensive is complemented in Soviet doctrine by the stress placed on defensive pressure through harassment, counterattacks, and other means of “active defense.” Constant pressure is necessary and mandatory at all times in order to probe and determine the correct relation of forces between the enemy and oneself. This unrelenting pressure is expressed in the insistence on momentum and continuity of advance and pursuit.

The strong Soviet emphasis on pressure and impetus of advance is extended to social and political affairs. Thus, well aware of the advantages to morale of continuous advance, Lenin advised: “It is necessary to strive for daily successes, even if small ... in order to retain the ‘morale ascendancy’.”¹ And Stalin warned against “a dangerous error called ‘loss of tempo’”²

Momentum

Soviet military writings stress the importance of the momentum or impetus of advance. Thus, Lt. General Burshtynovich declared: “The majority of large-scale operations conducted by the Soviet Army [in the latter half of the war] were characterized by momentum of tempo, which was achieved by Soviet troops in the breakthrough of the positional defense of the enemy.”³

Voroshilov praised “the huge sweep of consecutive and simultaneous operations ... with their crushing character and impetus...”⁴ Major General Zamiatin described “the unprecedented tempo of the offensive [of 1945] and the great depth of its blows.”⁵ According to Major General Evstigneev, the “Stalinist conception of an operation” includes “momentum of actions, combining the greatest speed of operational maneuver with decisive crushing blows in the most important directions.”⁶

Lt. General Zlobin has described the importance of “tempo” in an offensive as follows:

The tempo of the offensive plays an important role in the success of an operation. A lively tempo helps to gain time, creates unexpected situations for the enemy, ensures the initiative and deprives the enemy of taking steps to stem the progress of the offensive. Experience during the Fatherland War has shown that a lively pace usually ensures a rapid and successful completion of the operation with minimum losses.⁷

Relatively little has been written on the causes and means of creating this impetus of advance. According to Colonel Pavlenko, it depends mainly “on the effectiveness of the initial blow.”⁸ In *General Tactics* it is stated:

The *tempo* of the offensive depends upon many factors, and must be calculated in each particular case, considering the conditions of the concrete situation (the relation of forces, the quantity of means of suppression, degree of the enemy’s resistance, the conditions of terrain, etc.).⁹

The emphasis in Soviet doctrine is on the maintenance of a powerful blow not only throughout the entire assault and breakthrough, but especially in pursuit. Not only is it alleged that “The Red Army overthrew all affirmations on the waning force of the offensive,”¹⁰ but that it *increased* the momentum of its blows, both during each operation and with each new operation.

As early as 1940, the *Field Regulations* stated the need for blows constantly to “mount” in force and impetus.¹¹ Thus, as Lt. General Perevertkin has stated, momentum is attained by a planned and executed steady increase of the force of the blows being dealt, secured by timely commitment of reserves.¹²

Momentum is considered to be essential to success. Stalin himself wrote that “Only crushing blows of steadily increasing force can break the enemy’s resistance and bring us final victory.”¹³ Lt. General Zlobin, emphasizing the momentum of the operations of the Red Army in 1944 and 1945, concluded:

A Front operation should progress without interruption. Victory is achieved by a series of powerful blows delivered with increasing momentum. The art of conducting an operation consists in the achievement of a continuity of blows of ever-increasing force. The final blow should be the mightiest, a crushing blow.¹⁴

Soviet strategy, in contradistinction to that of the Germans, stresses mounting blows rather than a lightning initial strike. This mounting force of blows is attained only by careful preservation and commitment of strategic reserves. Major General Talensky has described this point well in the following passage:

Our High Command created superiority of forces not only by skillful maneuver of strategic reserves, but by a deeply thought-out system of mounting forces.... Stalinist military science, studying the experience of the past, has shown that wars are won not by him who throws all his forces into the first battle, but by him who is concerned for the consequent and undeviating mounting of forces, with the calculation of defeating the foe.¹⁵

Talensky elsewhere declared that this was “a new phenomenon previously non-existent in the history of wars and the military art.”¹⁶ Major General Isayev also presented this as a total innovation.¹⁷ (In degree, it actually was unprecedented.)

The 1944 *Field Regulations* stated in their introduction:

The continuity of a mighty blow to the complete defeat of the enemy attacking group, the gradual and steady increasing strength of the blow from depth, and also the development and consolidation of achieved success is effected by a second echelon of several divisions assigned by the army in the direction of the main blow.¹⁸

Continuity also pertains, as several of the quotations cited indicate, to the relation between operations. In evaluating the Civil War, it was recognized that modern war demands “continuous and systematic victories.” Some cases, where the “old theory” of pause and preparation between offensive operations was used, were attacked for this reason, and it was concluded that “all principles requiring breathing spells should and can be eliminated.”¹⁹ It is, of course, clear that these claims were often not met in subsequent Soviet military practice, and, as will be brought out later, they should be modified by the recognition in Bolshevik thought (applicable to military and nonmilitary affairs) of the need to consolidate all gains securely.

Impetus in advance and pursuit is expressed in the average speed of advance. For this reason, mobility is of great importance in the breakthrough

and especially in the subsequent exploitation and pursuit. According to Soviet sources, during the breakthrough phase the Soviet troops frequently maintained a tempo of 10 to 12 kilometers per day and sometimes more, as in the Nevelsky operation of October, 1943, when 18 kilometers were covered in 1 day, and in the Kirovgrad operation of January, 1944, in which 22 kilometers were covered in 1 day.²⁰

Speed of pursuit is essential to encircle and annihilate the retreating enemy once a breakthrough has been effected. Tank formations alone are inadequate, so mechanized and tankborne infantry are used, and their speed determines the tempo of advance.²¹ The tempo of advance of the Red Army in the Soviet-German war was usually from 20 to 25 kilometers per day, often from 25 to 40, and occasionally up to 60 kilometers per day. The operational mobility of tank formations occasionally reached 100 kilometers per day.²² For example, in the Belorussian operation the Soviet troops advanced 600 kilometers in 23 days; in the Vistula to the Oder (Warsaw-Poznan) operation, 600 kilometers in 18 days; and in the Silesian operation (also Vistula to the Oder), 300 kilometers in 10 days. Col. General Vol'sky led a tank dash from Bialystok to Elbing, on the Baltic, advancing 230 kilometers in 7 days; and finally and most outstanding, Marshal Malinovsky's armored forces dashed across Manchuria in August, 1945, covering 700 miles in 5 days.²³

Pursuit

Heavy stress is placed on the maintenance of momentum in pursuit. Pursuit must be organized immediately upon a breakthrough and enemy withdrawal and conducted with full intensity to the complete destruction of the foe. The Soviet field regulations of 1936 to 1945 stressed the following themes in discussing pursuit:

1. With the annihilation of the enemy in his zone of defense, unceasing pursuit of units escaping encirclement must be instituted immediately.
2. Pursuit must be conducted with full intensity of forces.
3. Pursuit [requires] ... the wide display of initiative by all commanders. Waiting for neighboring units is impermissible.

4. Pursuit must be continued without pause right up to the complete annihilation of the withdrawing enemy.
5. Complete defeat of the withdrawing enemy can be achieved only by unceasing pursuit.
6. Only a senior commander can cease pursuit.²⁴

These themes were all restated in 1948 by Lt. General Perevertkin and may be presumed to reflect current Soviet doctrine.^{25*} Exhortations on vigor of pursuit are frequent in the Soviet military press. As Lt. General Zlobin stated it, “If success is achieved, develop it swiftly and pursue the enemy relentlessly, overcoming all obstacles.”²⁶ And as another writer stated: “The basic aim of any battle will not be achieved if the beaten enemy is not decisively annihilated, but is able to withdraw.”²⁷

* In general, these same conditions are found in American military doctrine, except that the local field commander is given more initiative in instituting and ceasing pursuit. (See *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, FM 100-5, 1944, p. 151, par. 560, for a United States statement of the need for relentless pursuit.)

Numerous examples of orders in the Soviet-German war effecting the implementation of these regulations could be cited. In the limited, although extremely significant, counterblow before Moscow in late 1941, Zhukov ordered his Front: “Pursue the enemy untiringly, *giving* him no respite and not permitting him to reorganize his forces or to fortify new defense lines.”²⁸ Another order of the High Command (February 23, 1944) stated: “Don’t give the foe a breathing spell ... skillfully organize the pursuit of the foe.”²⁹ Finally, although this was not a Soviet operation, Soviet doctrinal influence may be seen in Kim Il Sung’s Order of the Day of January 5, 1951, which called on the North Korean army to “Pursue the enemy indefatigably. Surround and destroy the enemy units and formations. Neither by day or night give the enemy any breathing spell. Surround the enemy, cut his lines of communication, and destroy his manpower and equipment....”³⁰

Armored and cavalry units and aviation are expected to play the major role in pursuit. Soviet armored divisions are of two types: tank divisions and mechanized divisions. The primary mission of the tank division is to effect the breakthrough (in cooperation with other types of troops), and that of the mechanized division is to exploit success in pursuit. However, both divisions share both missions, and both are expected to maintain the momentum of attack and consequent pursuit. The tank division, relatively weak in organic

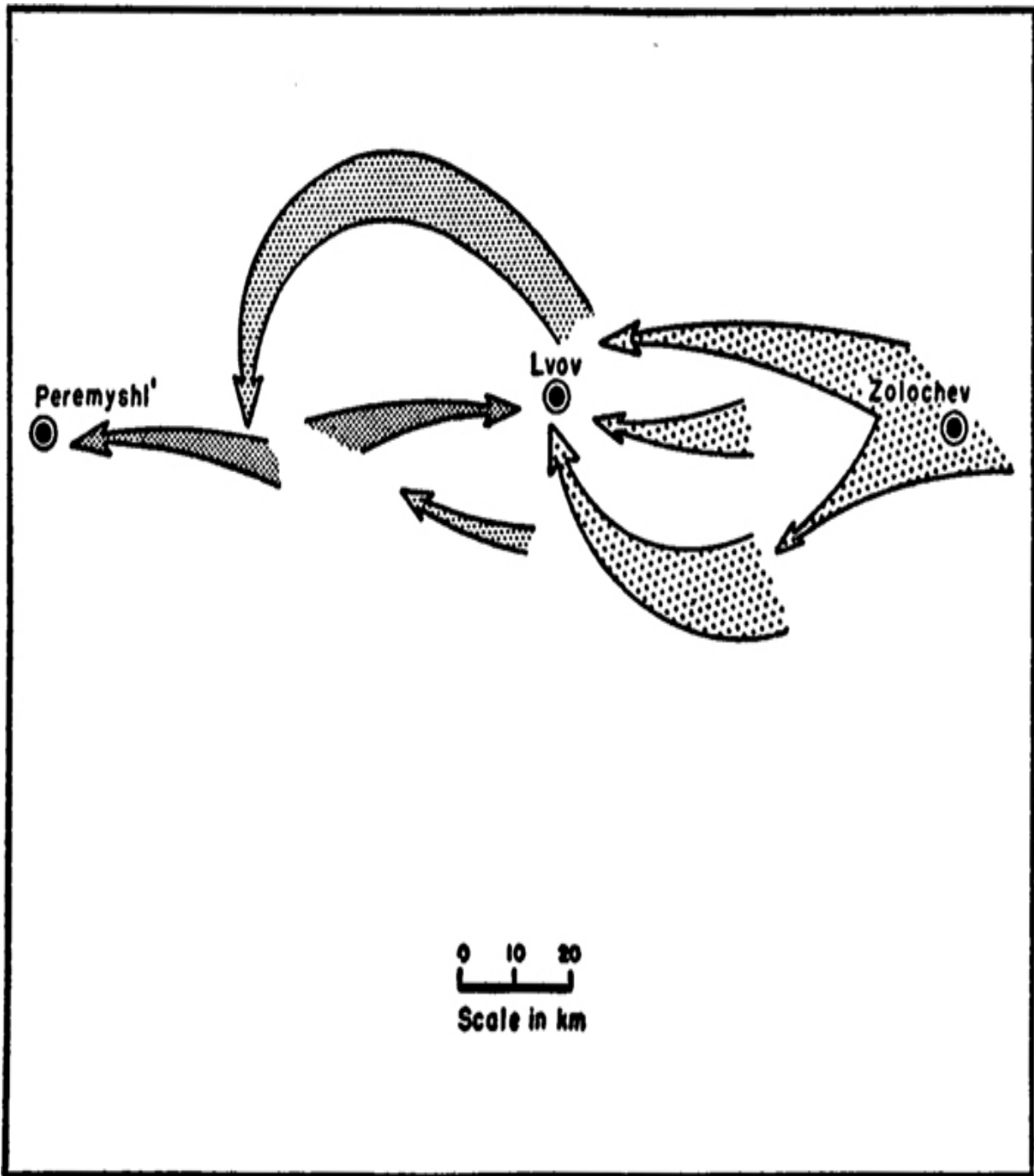
infantry, is not capable of sustained independent action, nor is it expected to be. The mechanized division is more balanced, although more comparable in firepower and shock power to the U.S. infantry division than to the U.S. armored division.

The Soviet command appears to be favoring the American doctrine (with its combination of these missions in the organization of a single type of armored division) by increasing, since the war, the number of mechanized divisions relative to tank divisions.

Aviation is similarly assigned an important role in pursuit. According to Colonel Sergeev, of the Army Air Force (WS), reconnaissance is the most important role of aviation in pursuit.³¹ This may be an overstatement, as the air forces also play an important part in disorganizing enemy attempts at withdrawal, attacking the enemy's operational reserves, and denying the enemy the ability to regroup and counterattack.

Two types of pursuit are distinguished in Soviet doctrine: frontal (direct) and parallel. Frontal pursuit follows and attempts to overtake the retreating enemy on the same roads; parallel pursuit follows parallel roads in an attempt to envelop and encircle the withdrawing forces and to annihilate them; it may attempt to reach objectives of particular importance (such as a potential new defense line) before the withdrawing hostile troops.

The *Field Regulations* since 1940 have stated that "*Parallel pursuit, along one or both flanks, gives the most decisive success.*"³²



[Pursuit and Encirclement at Lvov \(July 20-27, 1944\)](#)
 This map indicates the pursuit of German forces by troops of the First Ukrainian Front along the railroad line from Zolochev through Lvov to Peremyshl', and encirclement at Lvov. The northern parallel drive was an armored task force under General Rybalko; the southern one, an armored task force under General Leliushenko. (Based on a Soviet General Staff map)

Many Soviet accounts have explained the advantages of parallel pursuit.* In Major General Bronevsky's words: "Parallel pursuit is the more favorable

form since it can lead to the encirclement and annihilation of the withdrawing enemy in the zone of pursuit, and permits simultaneous seizure of operationally important regions and borders.”³³ Optimum success is considered to be achieved by a combination of both frontal and parallel pursuit.³⁴

* United States doctrine, as expressed in the 1944 *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, is very similar: “The object of the pursuit is the annihilation of the hostile forces. This can seldom be accomplished by a straight pushing back of the hostile forces on their lines of communication. Direct pressure against the retreating forces must be combined with an enveloping or encircling maneuver to place troops across the enemy’s lines of retreat. Encirclement of both flanks of the retreating forces or of their separate elements is attempted wherever conditions permit. Mechanized units are particularly suited for this purpose.” (See FM 100-5, p. 152, par. 561.)

Many operational and tactical examples could be given. Some on the operational level have already been mentioned in the discussion on tempo of advance. For example, General Fomichenko has described in detail how the Red Army “reached the Dnepr and forced the river—which in places is more than a kilometer wide—from the march.” The Germans, not expecting such a speedy crossing, were not prepared to prevent it and failed to dislodge the bridgehead before it was reinforced.³⁵ The Germans themselves recognized this danger from Soviet bridgeheads. As one prominent German military source has written: “It was certain that Russian bridgeheads which had existed only twenty-four hours would during that time have grown into a serious menace....”³⁶

In pursuit the Soviet Army bypasses strong points and isolated enemy remnants in order to maintain the momentum of advance. The aim of pursuit is the complete encirclement and annihilation of the hostile forces.

Consolidation

In view of the strong insistence in Soviet military doctrine on the importance of assuming the offensive and advancing wherever possible and of continuing the momentum of advance, there is reason to expect a failure to pay due heed to the necessity for consolidation of gains. Three factors have militated against this danger and have substantially overcome it. The first is the requirement of logistics and supply. The second is the Bolshevik realization of the need to guard against complacency during and after a

successful advance; and the third, fusing with the latter, is the Soviet experience of the Civil and Polish Wars in 1918-1921.

Stalin once said:

An offensive *without consolidation* of the positions already gained is an offensive doomed to failure. When can an offensive, in the military sphere let us say, be successful? When the advancing force is not limited to an unfounded advance forward, but strives at the same time to *consolidate* the positions gained, to *regroup* its forces in accordance with the changed circumstances, to *tighten* in the rear, and to *bring up* reserves. Why is this necessary? In order to protect against surprise, to liquidate separate breakthroughs, from which no offensive can be secure, and to prepare by this means for the complete liquidation of the foe.^{[37](#)}

Stalin then illustrated his point by reference to two failures to follow this rule: the Polish advance on Kiev in 1920 and the Soviet advance on Warsaw immediately thereafter. On another occasion he stated:

... there has never been, and can never be, a *successful* offensive without a regrouping of forces in the course of the offensive itself, without consolidating the occupied positions, without utilizing reserves to develop successes and push the offensive to its conclusion. In a headlong movement, i.e., one that does not observe these conditions, the offensive must inevitably work itself to a standstill and collapse. Rushing forward headlong is fatal in an offensive. Our rich experience in the civil war teaches us this.^{[38](#)}

In the world political arena, the Soviet Union is now considered to be going through a gigantic consolidation of her successes since 1945 in Europe and a completion of her last apparent gains in Asia.

Viewed in the Soviet framework of calculation of the relation of forces, consolidation means stabilizing the relation of forces at a time immediately following a favorable change in it, a stabilization necessary unless it is to be permitted to shift again as the enemy makes a counterattempt to return it to the former and (for him) more advantageous status quo. Gains must therefore be cautiously viewed until secured, and it is most important to avoid complacency over recent advances and to continue to calculate the relation of forces. As Stalin said in 1944:

The enemy is sustaining defeat after defeat.... Precisely for this reason, great as our successes may be, we must continue soberly to appraise the enemy's strength, be vigilant and not permit conceit, complacency and carelessness to enter our ranks. There has never been a case in the history of war when the enemy leapt into the abyss of his own accord. To win the war we must drive the enemy to the precipice and throw him over.^{[39](#)}

Consolidation means liquidation of hostile remnants, construction of defense positions to hold against counterblows, the securing of new communication and supply lines, and the regrouping of forces for new advances.

CHAPTER 9

THE PRINCIPLE OF

ANNIHILATION

The Marxist idea of the inevitable conflict of classes holds that in the essential nature of things the end will see the total annihilation of one by the other. The banishment of the exploitation of man by man will come with the complete elimination of the bourgeois, imperialist exploiters by the victorious world proletariat. Compromise (i.e., “coexistence” of the two inevitably hostile classes) is possible only as the transient product of a “temporary balance” in the “relation of forces.”

Soviet doctrine proceeds from this perspective of continuous (although not necessarily armed) struggle to the death. Peace is referred to by the Soviets as providing a “breathing spell” [*peredyshka*]. Thus, Stalin declared in his report to the Fourteenth Party Congress:

The most fundamental, novel, most decisive, and most pervasive of all events for this period in the realm of foreign relations was that between our country which is building socialism and the countries of the capitalist world there has been established a certain temporary balance of forces—a balance which is defined by the current streak of “peaceful coexistence” between the land of the Soviets and the countries of capitalism. That which we once considered as a short breathing spell after the war [the Brest-Litovsk peace], has extended itself into a whole period of breathing spell. From this has come this certain balance of forces and this period of “peaceful co-existence” between the world of the bourgeoisie and the world of the proletariat.¹

This has always been considered as being a temporary situation. One early Soviet writer declared: “We must not forget that a breathing spell does not mean a complete destruction [of our foes].”² Stalin has repeatedly stated: “It must not be forgotten that so long as capitalist encirclement exists, so will the

danger of intervention, with all its resultant consequences [i.e., possible annihilation], exist.”³

We have seen previously the strong fear which, although unjustified, manifests itself in aiming at the annihilation of the foe as the only alternative to being annihilated by him. The usual term is annihilation [*unichtozhenie*], although destruction [*sokruzhenie* or *razgrom*] and liquidation [*likvidatsiia*] are sometimes used in this total sense. Although the aim of annihilation is considered to be rational and calculated, emotional hatred may be invoked to instill the necessary spirit at subordinate levels. As the 1936 *Field Regulations* stated: “The commander and the fighter must be brought up in the spirit of hatred toward the foe, and unswerving will toward his annihilation in battle.”⁴

The Bolshevik conception of annihilation does not necessarily mean physical destruction, but it does mean total eradication of any form of opposition. So long as the idea of *Kto kogo?* (that either the enemy or the Soviet [Party] leadership *must* destroy the other) remains, there can be no lasting peace for the Soviet leaders until the enemy is totally annihilated. Annihilation is considered to be the *necessary* and *sole* alternative to being annihilated, and all who are not absolutely controlled are potential opposition.

The Military Aim of Annihilation

Lenin, with his combat frame of reference toward the world, quickly seized on Clausewitz’ realization that the chief military aim is not limited spatial objectives, but destruction of the enemy’s army.⁵ This view was quickly adopted into Soviet military doctrine. As Tukhachevsky said:

A field army is completely unconcerned with covering the entire space of the borders between states. It is concentrated in the decisive direction, and considers that the best means of all to secure its border is by the annihilation of the army of the enemy.

From the beginning of the war ... the manpower of the one side seek the manpower of the other side in order to destroy and annihilate it.⁶

The two notable instances of failure to apply this principle adequately probably will serve to prevent recurrences: in 1920 in the Polish war, space

was more sought after than destruction of the hostile force, and the war was lost.⁷ The other instance was in 1941, when the frontier was saturated with Soviet troops and there were inadequate operational reserves, so that the German penetration spearheads consequently drove as far as several hundred kilometers in a few days.

In the prewar period, annihilation of the hostile armed force was adequately recognized in Soviet doctrine; the failure in 1941 was owing to an overestimation of Soviet capabilities and improper defensive deployment. In 1934 the Soviet military expert Amiragov wrote:

The spirit of decision, audacity, steadfastness in opposing the enemy, the art of taking the offensive and conducting it to the end, of achieving the annihilation and the destruction of the enemy, guided by the circumstances, these were the principal traits of Lenin as a military thinker, and as an organizer and educator of the armed forces.

Lenin himself believed that the key in the enemy country, that is to say that which guarantees victory, is not the occupation of a part of the hostile country nor the fact of forcing the army of the opponent to abandon his positions, but the annihilation, the destruction of the hostile armed forces.⁸

The aim of annihilation was formalized in Soviet military doctrine with the inclusion of the following article in the 1936 *Field Regulations** (repeated in the same or similar words in all subsequent regulations): “Combat actions of the Red Army will be carried out to annihilation. Attainment of decisive victory and complete destruction of the foe is the basic aim in war....”⁹

* It is, of course, true that in Western military doctrine also “The ultimate objective of all military operations is the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces in battle.” (See *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, 1944, FM 100-5, p. 32, par. 112.) However, the broad nuances of annihilation in the Soviet view, as set forth in this chapter, give this a different strategic meaning in Soviet doctrine.

Annihilation is declared to be the “fundamental,” “basic,” and “decisive” aim of Soviet combat operations. This is frequently and forcefully stated in Soviet regulations, military discussions, and wartime general orders.¹⁰ For example, the *Manual on Training for Hand-to-Hand Combat* states: “Attack and annihilation of the enemy in hand-to-hand struggle is the most decisive moment in combat.”¹¹ The leading Soviet air ace, Colonel Pokryshkin, stated: “We Soviet pilots consider it our duty, our sacred obligation, not simply to meet in combat, but *to force our will upon the foe*, and mobilizing all spiritual and material forces, *to fight to the complete annihilation of the enemy*.”¹²

Annihilation in Detail

Annihilation is believed to be most possible when the enemy is isolated and unable to maneuver—in other words, in encirclement. This explains the strong preference for encirclement in Soviet military doctrine. Further, annihilation in detail is the favored means of destruction, again isolating and destroying the hostile forces by concentrated superior forces. This is seen in Soviet foreign policy, which aims at splitting the hostile world camp into as many parts as possible and then destroying it piecemeal. It is also the counterpoint to the Bolshevik stress on the maintenance of unity and the great fear of fragmentation and isolation.

The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated:

The guiding idea of battle to the annihilation of the surrounded enemy is the consequent splintering of his unit with the aim of compressing the smaller surrounded groups into a close area and bringing them under destructive cross machine gun and mortar fire.

Success in combat is attained by the sudden concentration of all or a great part of the weapons of the unit against single groups of the enemy so as to destroy him *in detail*,¹³

Flank blows and envelopment following a breakthrough are directed to this same ultimate end. As Major General Talensky said: “In the course of the development of a breakthrough the Red Army widely used a skillful combination of flank blows which led to the dismemberment of the enemy’s main forces, to their encirclement and subsequent annihilation in detail.”¹⁴

Maneuver by fire is directed to this same end. Lt. General Alekseev wrote that “Maneuver by fire consists of swift and surprise concentrations of fire ... on the most important combat elements of the enemy, with the aim of annihilating him in detail.”¹⁵

Lt. General Shilovsky, of the General Staff, has summed up “one of the most important theses of military art: to destroy the enemy in detail.”¹⁶

Annihilation by a “Series of Battles”

Even in the early analyses of the Civil War, the idea was stressed that modern war requires a number of “continuous and systematic victories,” and

that “Continuity of the conduct of operations is the most important condition of victories.” Further, when several fronts were involved, each should be taken successively, *beginning with the most difficult*, but “only after the *complete liquidation* of each front in turn.”¹⁷ It was concluded that “all principles requiring breathing spells should and can be eliminated,” and that the “old theory” of long preparation and waiting, when used in the final campaign against Wrangel, yielded indecisive results.¹⁸

Our discussion of the “mounting force” of Soviet operations has indicated the importance in Soviet doctrine, especially since the recent Soviet-German war, of a “series” of successive operations of steadily increasing force. Thus, the Soviets seek momentum plus mass. As we have noted, the Soviet criticisms of blitzkrieg stress the difference that the German strategy threw all its forces into one tremendous, but “adventuristic,” strike, instead of into a *series* of blows of increasing force. Similarly, in contradistinction to the German ideal of Cannae, the Soviets seek a *series* of encirclements. The Soviets denounce the conception of a single “battle of annihilation” [the German *Vernichtungsschlacht*] and support as necessary a “campaign to annihilation” [*Vernichtungsfeldzug*].

The classical Soviet example is the series of offensives in 1944, termed either “the ten crushing blows” or “the ten Stalinist blows,” first enumerated by Stalin in his address on the occasion of the twenty-seventh anniversary of the Revolution (November 6, 1944).^{*} These “ten crushing blows” became the subject of frequent reference.¹⁹ Especially in the period since late 1949, they have more frequently been termed “the ten Stalinist blows,” following the example set by Marshal Voroshilov and Army General Shtemenko.²⁰

^{*} Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War*, pp. 157–160. The ten operations were: (1) January, 1944, the lifting of the siege of Leningrad; (2) February—March, 1944, liberation of the Ukraine on the right bank of the Dnepr; (3) April—May, 1944, liberation of the Crimea and Odessa; (4) June, 1944, Karejia and Vyborg reoccupied; (5) June-July, 1944, liberation of Belorussia and part of Poland and Latvia; (6) July-August, 1944, liberation of the Western Ukraine and crossing of the Vistula; (7) August, 1944, the Jassy-Kishinev operation and surrender of Rumania and Bulgaria; (8) September—October, 1944, the Baltic states reoccupied and Finland defeated; (9) October, 1944 (still in progress then) the liberation of Hungary; (10) October, 1944, northern Finland cleared of the foe.

The Soviet Army is credited with successfully solving for the first time in history the problem of creating a *series* of operations united in a single strategic design. As Major General Talensky stated:

The Fatherland War brought a new solution of the problem of “successive operations” in that the Red Army carried out *a whole series of operations* simultaneously on a number of sectors, split up in a definite order both in space and time, but united by the plan for achieving one strategic objective.^{[21](#)}

These Soviet conceptions of “a series of battles” leading to annihilation, in contradistinction to the idea of annihilation by a single battle, are in part mere rationalization of the necessity for a “series” of operations in most campaigns or wars, as in the recent experience of the Soviets. They would certainly not reject an opportunity to annihilate an enemy in a single battle or operation. Other probable reasons for this theoretical formulation of doctrine are the Bolshevik stress on sober calculation, anti-“adventurism,” and awareness of the need for mounting force of operations fed by reserves. Characteristically, since the single battle seems (in military and Bolshevik calculation) to be out of reach, it is therefore declared to be “no good” (as was the German blitzkrieg campaign).

In world political relations, from the mid-1920’s until 1949, Soviet writing stressed the need of a “series of wars” to rid the world of capitalism. Since November, 1949, a number of Politburo members have stated that the very next world war will spell the complete defeat of world capitalism.^{[22](#)}

“To the Very End”

In Bolshevik writing, the phrase *do kontsa* (“to the end”—or better, “to the very end”) seems to have a particular significance. Following the Bolshevik pattern of thinking in terms of naked alternatives of annihilation either of the enemy or by the enemy, there is a strong tendency to exaggerate the need for total annihilation of the foe, *do kontsa*, to the last soldier, to the last sign of opposition. This same tendency operates on the domestic Soviet political scene, where the least sign of “kowtowing to the West” or the least criticism of some phase of the regime is construed as being a nascent counterrevolutionary tendency which must be uprooted *do kontsa*. The Bolsheviks consider that there existed (and if permitted, exists) a natural Russian tendency not to carry things through to completion, a laxness, sometimes termed “Oblomovism.” Hence, the Bolsheviks feel that they must

be exceptionally vigilant and harsh in overcoming this alleged Russian failure to act, or think in terms of acting, *do kontsa*. This fear of laxness in carrying through decisions is seen by Soviet emphasis on inculcating the opposite. As one military writer recently urged: "The Soviet commander must possess a strong will, directed to active, decisive actions, in overcoming obstacles, in carrying through decisions made *to the end*."²³ This principle of acting *do kontsa* is evident in relation to a number of points in our previous discussion and is closely tied to the principle of the mandatory annihilation of the foe. Similarly, persistence in annihilating the enemy in general is stressed. The *Infantry Combat Regulations* of 1942-1945 stated: "The decision to smash the foe must be unswerving, and carried through *to the very end*."²⁴ Its manifestation in pursuit of the enemy is clear. The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated: "Pursuit must be continued *without a breathing spell*, day and night, with unweakened energy, *right up to the complete annihilation* of the withdrawing enemy."²⁵ This is frequently stated.²⁶ In implementing the concentration of forces, "it is important not only to have a superiority of forces at the beginning of the operation, but also to preserve it *to the very end* of the operation, to the complete achievement of the planned aim."²⁷ Action should never be undertaken until it can be carried out to its completion. Frunze, echoing Lenin, declared, "one should not play with an uprising unless one is ready to go through with it *to the very end*."²⁸

Thus we see that the Soviet political determination to exert all means toward the annihilation of the enemy, to overcome the alleged Russian trait of laxness, and to carry through all action undertaken, *do kontsa*, is applied in military doctrine, reinforcing the usual military requirement for decisive action.

CHAPTER 10

RETREAT

Retreat is accepted by Bolshevism as a likely eventuality in the course of political and military history. Limited retreats are regarded as being neither impossible nor disastrous. As Lenin repeatedly stated, “History does not move in a straight line, but by zigzags.” Thus, tactical changes must be made in accordance with “the ebb and flow” of events, the changing “relation of forces.” Sometimes temporary retreat is necessary or even advisable in order to make greater future gains: “There are times when we must take one step backward, in order [later] to take two steps forward.”

Recognizing that retreat is at times inevitable, Lenin once said:

... wars which uniformly began and ended in victorious attack do not exist in world history, or if so, as exceptions. And that applies to ordinary wars. And to such a war as decides the fate of a whole class, as decides the question of socialism or capitalism—is there any reasonable ground for assuming that a people, in resolving this issue for the first time, can immediately find the sole correct and infallible solution? What grounds are there for assuming this? None. Experience says the converse.¹

Time and again Lenin emphasized the need of being able not only to advance (the presumed “normal” course to be pursued whenever feasible), but also, when necessary, of being able to retreat. He said, “We must be able not only to advance heroically, but also to retreat heroically” and “It is necessary not only to advance, but also to retreat. That every soldier knows.”²

Retreat: An Adverse Relation of Forces

Retreat is undertaken (aside from minor local “ambush” withdrawals or withdrawals from “probing” to determine the relation of forces) only as the necessary consequence of an adverse shift in the relation of forces. The first instance of “retreat” by Soviet Russia occurred almost immediately after the Bolshevik seizure of power. After bitter internal dispute over the question of accepting the German-proffered Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Lenin’s view of necessary retreat (acceptance) prevailed. In this intra-Party debate Lenin declared:

Adopting a serious attitude towards defense of the country means preparing thoroughly for it, and *strictly calculating the relation of forces*. If our forces are obviously small, the best means of defense is *retreat into the interior of the country*. Whoever regards this as an artificial formula, made up to suit the needs of the moment, is advised to read old Clausewitz, one of the greatest authorities on military matters, concerning the lessons of history in this connection. The “Left” Communists [i.e., those opposing the peace of Brest-Litovsk], however, do not give the slightest indication that they understand the significance of the question of *the relation of forces*.³

As he explained, “I want to concede space to the momentary victor, in order to gain time.” “We must not tie our hands in one strategic maneuver. All depends on the relation of forces....”⁴

Stalin too has fully recognized the need for retreats. As he put it, “retreat under certain unfavorable conditions is as legitimate a form of warfare as the offensive.”⁵ On another occasion Stalin spoke of “... a proper retreat when the enemy is strong, when *retreat is inevitable*, when to accept battle forced upon us by the enemy is obviously disadvantageous, when, with the given relation of forces, retreat becomes the only way to ward off a blow....”⁶ Stalin recognized the strategic necessity of being able to retreat properly as well as to advance (in both the political and military contexts). He wrote:

The revolution showed that the Bolsheviks knew how to advance.... But the revolution also showed that the Bolsheviks knew how to retreat in an orderly way when the situation took an unfavorable turn ... without panic or commotion, so as to preserve their cadres, rally their forces, and, having reformed their ranks in conformity with the new situation, once again to resume the attack on the enemy.⁷

The resounding “alteration of the relation of forces” caused by the blows of the Nazi legions in June, 1941, naturally required a policy of retreat. Later Soviet attempts to explain this as an instance of planned retreat in a strategy of active defense are not convincing. They were properly phrased in terms of

Soviet doctrine, but, as we shall see later, defense in depth (although a sound strategy) was adopted solely from necessity and at the expense of great losses incurred by failure to have prepared for it in advance. Thus, for example, Major General Talensky has stated since the war: “*Naturally the unfavorable relation of forces for us in the first period of the Great Fatherland War necessitated the retreat of our troops into the depth of their territory, losing space.*”⁸

Not until the 1942 issue of the *Infantry Combat Regulations* was defense introduced into Soviet regulations as “a normal aspect of combat in contemporary war.”⁹ Retreat was not added until the 1944 *Field Regulations* appeared. After repeating that “Offensive combat is the fundamental form of combat action of the Red Army,” the *Regulations* continued: “Together with this, the Regulations recognize the possibility in contemporary war not only of defense, but also retreat as an independent maneuver, when circumstances demand withdrawing troops out from under a blow of superior forces of the enemy, in order to give units the opportunity to gather forces and again move to the offensive.”¹⁰ These *Regulations* of 1944 were also the first to contain a special chapter on “Retreat and Withdrawal from Battle.”¹¹

The more usual term in Soviet military writing is “retreat” [*otstuplenie*] rather than “withdrawal” [*otkhod*], although the regulations usually use the latter term.

Retreat must be undertaken not only in case of an adverse change in the relation of forces caused by the enemy’s action, but also in the case of an “excessive” advance, i.e., one which exceeds the ability to consolidate the initial gains. To fail to withdraw, although only to the extent necessary for consolidation, would be “adventuristic” and an “excess.” Stalin has explained the need for retreat under such conditions:

*As for the character of the retreat, there are retreats and retreats. There are times when a party or an army has to retreat because it has suffered defeat. In such cases, the army or party retreats to preserve itself and its ranks for new battles.... But there are other times, when in its advance a victorious party or army runs too far ahead, without providing itself with an adequate base in the rear. This creates a serious danger. So as not to lose connection with its base, an experienced party or army generally finds it necessary in such cases to fall back a little, to draw closer to and establish better contact with its base, in order to provide itself with all it needs, and then resume the offensive more confidently and with guarantee of success.*¹²

Retreat and Defense in Depth

Retreat is a defensive form of maneuver and has been termed “maneuver backward.”¹³ This is not merely a salving phrase; withdrawal as a conscious maneuver preserves at least some of the much-valued initiative. Tactical withdrawal may be undertaken in order to gain greater freedom of maneuver. As Major General Kolchigin stated, “withdrawal of a formation from battle must be considered a maneuver ... to gain freedom of action, to secure further active operations.”¹⁴ Reflecting the acceptance of retrograde maneuver in an adverse relation of forces, the Soviets have a special award, the Order of Kutuzov (created in 1942), awarded to high commanders exclusively for excellence in planned and controlled withdrawal. This is the only award given by any state solely for retreat.

The maneuver of retreat is the necessary basis for mobile active defense in depth. Soviet writing since the war has admitted retreat as a necessary maneuver for this strategy: “In the beginning of the war the Red Army retreated, harassing the enemy. It preserved its combat reserves. This tactic of retreat in formation with the tactic of annihilating the men and material of the foe preserved the combat might of the Red Army, and gave the possibility to win time for the collection of forces and preparation of the crushing counterblow.”¹⁵ In fact, we know that despite the theoretical awareness of the desirability of retreat under unfavorable conditions, the Red Army in 1941 was totally unprepared for withdrawal and defense in depth. The Soviets succeeded in accomplishing the exceedingly difficult task of stopping the German advance primarily because the Germans had overestimated their own capabilities, not because the Soviets had correctly estimated theirs. It is now taught, at least in the junior military academies, that the retreat of 1941-1942 was a carefully planned, controlled withdrawal—part of a “model war” entirely planned and executed by Stalin, an explanation similar to that in the Soviet public press.

The lessons of this retreat, in which two million men (and double this number by the end of 1941), two-thirds of their tanks, and three-fourths of their aircraft were lost in 3 months of disorganized retreat,¹⁶ have not been lost on the Soviet high command. According to German sources, the Soviets retreated in long, tiring moves instead of in the German retreat tactic of leapfrog short jumps with special rearguard forces. Current Soviet doctrine

has adopted this German tactic. Rearguards (frequently taken from reserves) prepare positions in the rear of the main force, which then withdraws through them along prepared routes (which have special protection, particularly anti-aircraft defenses). The “scorched earth” policy inaugurated in 1941 was not a planned and previously prepared stratagem, but was again one of desperation. Even in 1941 the Soviets did manage to carry out extensive demolition of valuable installations, heavy weapons, and similar objects. When conditions permitted, mining and booby traps were used very widely. In Kiev and Sevastopol in 1941 and 1942, remote-control radio mines were used to blow up whole city blocks after the Germans occupied them.¹⁷ In any planned retreat, such measures would be employed on a wide scale.

Controls on Withdrawal

The keynote of Soviet military doctrine on withdrawal is that “Retreat must be conducted in an organized way and with planned rear guard battles....”¹⁸ As the 1940 *Field Regulations* stated: “Retreat is one of the most complicated forms of maneuver,” and hence, “Every retreat must be organized and completed by a definite plan.”¹⁹

The 1936 and all subsequent *Field Regulations* required that “Withdrawal of a troop unit can only be executed by order of the senior commander.”²⁰ This is stated both for “retreat” and for “withdrawal from battle.”* The “senior commander” refers to the next highest command: a battalion cannot withdraw without permission of the regimental commander; and a division, without the permission of the Front (Army Group; or when extant, the Corps) commander. The difficulties caused for small units are obvious, but of course withdrawal cannot be totally controlled. Nonetheless, the regulations aim at effecting the very maximum of control over withdrawal. Since 1942 the regulations have even required that when encircled, the unit is not to attempt to fight its way out of encirclement without permission of the higher command.²¹ Also, continued fighting and no surrender, even in encirclement, is mandatory.²² Here, as in all other forms of operation, initiative is denied to lower and intermediate commands, whose function is the implementation of the plan as arranged at very high levels.

* Postwar United States regulations also require the approval of decision for a retrograde movement, but more freedom of initiative is given to subordinate commanders; and even in case of failure to use sound judgment, the sanction would be removal from command, but not execution. In the autumn of 1942, the Soviet commander who evacuated Voroshilovsk without permission **was** reported to have been executed secretly for this.

In addition to the regulations and the commander's realization that independent action is likely to be the end of his career, special rear security detachments [*zagraditel'nye otriadf*] are used not only to prevent hostile infiltration and individual desertion, but also to prevent unauthorized withdrawal or spontaneous retreat. The use of such detachments originated in the Civil War, and in an article in 1922 it was examined from the particular standpoint of checking retreat.²³ The conclusion at that time was that this use of such detachments had proved unsuccessful. Nonetheless, in the autumn maneuvers of the Moscow Military District of that same year, *Chon* ("Elements of Special Designation") troops were used as "reserves" in the rear of the other troops.²⁴ In September, 1941, the Commissariat of Defense ordered the introduction of such detachments with strengths of one-ninth of the combat force (one battalion to each division, one company to each battalion) to prevent unauthorized withdrawal and panic. This emergency step was not required on a wide scale after the stabilization of the front in the winter of 1941–1942, but the use of such detachments was retained in various formations and engagements throughout the Soviet-German war. Except in the autumn of 1941, these detachments were composed, for the most part, of NKVD security troops (now in the MVD), although in some cases regular army detachments were used. Their effectiveness varied greatly.

Thus, the Soviet command attempts to control withdrawal as tightly as possible, and keep it within the plan of operations, by strict regulations and discipline and, in extreme cases of disregard for the regulations, by constraint of arms.

CHAPTER 11

RESERVES

In the Soviet conception, all manner of resources—material and spiritual, military and political—are thought of as “reserves” to be committed according to their most effective use in the over-all plan. Thus, the use of subversive and disaffected elements in the enemy’s rear is calculated and is employed in the manner deemed most useful to the over-all strategic plan. As Riazanov stated in 1927, in relation to future wars involving the Soviet Union, “Of course we have a great strategic advantage. ... We have reserves in the enemy’s rear.”¹ In discussing the October Revolution, Stalin listed the following as being the “reserves” of the Bolsheviks: contradictions among the various social groups in Russia; contradictions among the capitalist powers; the colonial and proletarian movements in the world; state power and the Red Army; the peasantry; and the apparatus of diplomacy and foreign trade.² Stalin often termed the colonial peoples of the East “the great reserves of our revolution.”³ Although the more conventional military meaning of the term is discussed in this chapter, this general Soviet conception should be kept in mind.

We have noted the Soviet emphasis on the same factors in their target objectives as in their own defense. The Soviet emphasis on maintaining reserves is apparently related to the general fear of being “provoked” by the enemy, in this case into premature commission of reserves, loss of the freedom of maneuver which such reserves offer, and hence loss of the initiative. This concern is manifested not only in attempts to maintain and secure their own reserves, but in the strong efforts made to dissipate and destroy those of the enemy.

The Soviet preference for encirclement (and the stress on its outer ring), for parallel pursuit to isolate the withdrawing foe from his reserves, for

secondary attacks and other means of deception calculated to provoke the enemy into committing his reserves, and other actions are manifestations of this strong concern with isolating and neutralizing enemy reserves. The disdainful Soviet criticism of the blitzkrieg is based squarely on an alleged German lack of attention to reserves.

Civil War experience with reserves had been assessed variously. Generally, reserves had been inadequate, and many saw in this a serious weakness to be remedied.⁴ Others, notably Tukhachevsky, concluded that “strategic reserves, the utility of which was always doubtful, we need not at all in our war.”⁵ He stated further, “Now there is one question; how to use numbers in order to gain the maximum force of the blow. There is one answer: *release all troops in the attack, not holding in reserve a single bayonet....* When I say ‘don’t hold a single bayonet in reserve’ I have in mind strategic reserves....”⁶ The more pervasive trend in Bolshevik thought stressing the importance of strategic reserves overruled Tukhachevsky and the others who became so sure of reserves in the form of the proletariat of other nations that they neglected strategic and operational military reserves.

The Role of Strategic Reserves

The deployment of Soviet troops in June, 1941, seriously violated the Soviet doctrinal concern for reserves. At the outbreak of the war, their forces were almost exclusively concentrated in the frontier area. The subsequent history of the Soviet-German war demonstrated that the employment of strategic reserves was later soundly handled. During the difficult years of 1941 and 1942, the Soviet high command showed restraint in the denial of reinforcements to the front in order to build up adequate reserves and to regain the strategic initiative by their timely commitment.

The first use of strategic reserves was at Moscow in December, 1941, when the recently arrived Siberian armies and the newly created artillery reserve were committed. Even in this crucial battle, great restraint was shown. Bulganin indicated the Soviet plan for the use of reserves (even though we may remain unconvinced that Stalin was, as claimed, exclusively responsible) when he stated:

During the battle of Moscow, Comrade Stalin's wisdom and courage were displayed with exceptional force. Notwithstanding the grave situation at the front, Comrade Stalin saw to it that the reserves were not prematurely expended. Knowing that the *Stavka* [GHQ] had large reserves at their disposal near Moscow, the Command of the Western Front [Zhukov] asked for reinforcements, but Comrade Stalin ordered him to hold up the enemy with the forces at his command. Soon the wisdom of Comrade Stalin's decision became evident. Comrade Stalin held those reserves for the purpose of launching a decisive counter-offensive. At the proper time, the front received these reserves in the necessary quantity, and this was the decisive factor in the defeat of the enemy near Moscow.⁷

Not until Stalingrad was the decisive counteroffensive launched, and even then only part of the strategic reserves were committed. In keeping with the Soviet doctrine of the “mounting force” of blows, reserves were constantly being accumulated in vast quantities for later commission in adequate numbers to secure the planned advance by momentum. Major General Talensky stressed the role of reserves for maintaining the momentum of the constantly increasing force of blows and contrasted it (as Soviet writing constantly does) with the German blitzkrieg:

The German method consisted of throwing in their basic reserves in the first period of the war.... Our high command, proceeding from the correct evaluation of the character of contemporary war, constantly strengthened the might of the Red Army. It always prepared the necessary reserves for future offensive operations, for dealing crushing blows to the foe at the decisive moment, in the decisive direction then and there, where and when it decided the outcome of the campaign. And that has secured victory to the Red Army. Our high command created superiority in forces not only by skillful maneuver of strategic reserves, but by a deeply thought system of mounting forces.⁸

This concern with reserves is elevated to the level of the “permanently operating factors” and is similarly ascribed to Stalin. Voroshilov wrote:

Along with the thesis concerning the permanently operating factors of victory, in the strategic planning of the war and its decisive campaigns and separate operations stands another, no less important, thesis—on reserves.

... in the first stage of the Great Fatherland War, along with the organization of active defense, the accumulation of strategic and operational reserves for the waging of a prolonged and victorious war occupied the major share of Stalin's attention.

It is known that at all stages of the war every operation by order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief had to be ensured by the reserves necessary for its execution. In this lies one of the particularities of Stalinist strategic leadership of the combat actions of the Soviet Army in the Great Fatherland War.⁹

The artillery reserve (ARGK), built at the suggestion of and by Marshal Voronov, despite the great shortages of materiel after the early German advance, was always a particularly important element. The artillery reserve was first committed in force under Voronov himself at Kachalino, in the opening of the counteroffensive at Stalingrad (November, 1942).¹⁰

Special resources, including the strategic air force (ADD) and airborne troops (VDV), are described in the regulations, and were used in practice, as being special reserves of the *Stavka* to be assigned to Fronts (or used independently) for particular missions.

Operational and Tactical Reserves

The significance of operational reserves is similarly stressed in Soviet doctrine. As Lt. General Zlobin wrote:

The question of operational reserves and their utilization represents a very important point in operational security. The maintenance of a decisive superiority in the direction of the main blow is the fundamental prerequisite for the success of an offensive undertaken by the assault formation of a Front. An offensive operation waged without reserves is doomed to failure. The composition of the reserves of a front is determined by the depth of the task assigned to it and a realistic calculation of the relation of forces in each phase of the operation.

Always have reserves, otherwise the operation is bound to come to a standstill. Spent reserves should be reconstituted in the course of an operation at the expense of secondary sectors.¹¹

Operational and tactical reserves are used, in general, for purposes similar to those for which strategic reserves are used, but on their corresponding levels (tactical reserves being those of division and lower units). Their main missions are (1) in the defense, to interdict and repulse any enemy penetration or breakthrough; (2) in the offensive, to repulse or annihilate any hostile counterattacks; and (3) to exploit and develop successes, consolidate gains, and reinforce pursuit.¹² Some reserves must be kept at *all* times to meet any unforeseen danger.

The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* and the 1944 *Field Regulations* stated:

Reserves are established for repulsing unexpected enemy blows, especially on the flanks and sector joints, for support of the units in battle, and also for the development and consolidation of

successes achieved.¹³

The primary purpose of operational and tactical reserves in defense is the annihilation of hostile penetrations. As Major General Kniazev wrote, before the recent war, “The disposition of reserves must secure the possibility of combined action of corps and army reserves for the annihilation of the enemy who have broken through.”¹⁴ In 1948, another writer declared that “Counterattacks are conducted by forces of the second echelon or reserves, with the aim of annihilating the enemy who have wedged into the defense....”¹⁵

According to a 1942 Commissariat of Defense Order (No. 306), one-ninth of the forces were held as the basic reserve in an offensive. Specifically, for the battalion, an infantry platoon with medium weapons was the basic reserve (not including the second echelon); for the regiment, an infantry company with medium weapons (including antitank guns); and for the division, a reinforced infantry battalion. The disposition of reserves was as follows: that for the battalion, 300 to 400 meters in the rear; that for the regiment, 500 to 600 meters in the rear; and that for the division, up to 1000 meters in the rear.¹⁶

One further comment on reserves is the use of the previously discussed “rear-security detachments” as reserves, with the special missions of preventing hostile infiltration of combat units and agents and desertion or unauthorized retreat by Soviet units or soldiers.

CHAPTER 12

THE PRINCIPLES OF UNITY AND COMBINED ARMS

Monolithic Compactness and Unity

Absolute unity of strategy, doctrine, organization, and plan is sought by the Soviet leadership. This goal of absolute compact unity is frequently termed “monolithism.” Monolithism, in Soviet terminology, denotes a granite-like organization with absolute internal homogeneity and external unity of action, with no “fissures” through which the enemy can penetrate to destroy this unity of aim and action. It is this conception which makes “deviation” in any degree seem so disastrous.

The Bolshevik approach tends toward extremes; unity must be *absolute* or there is disunity. It has a counterpoint in the simultaneous isolation of subordinate parts from one another (i.e., the police are separated from the army, several completely independent espionage systems operate simultaneously abroad, etc.), but this compartmentalization of subordinate parts exists only to ensure that no rival to the supreme leadership of the Party (and corollary State) can arise and hence to preserve monolithic unity of the whole. It will be remembered that the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party originally split (in 1903) over the question of organizational discipline, Lenin and the Bolsheviks favoring tightly disciplined organization. The Soviets have continued to hold this view, which Lenin developed and Stalin drove to its logical conclusion by forbidding any disagreements or free discussion within Party, State, or Army.

This was one major point on which Frunze and his colleagues prevailed in 1921 when they sought to establish a unified military doctrine:

One of the basic conditions for securing the maximum potency of the Red Army is to transform it into a monolithic organization, welded together from top to bottom not only by common political ideology, but also by unity of views on the character of the military problems facing the republic, on the method of solving these problems, as well as on the system of combat training of troops.¹

As has been noted, the question of organizing the army was one of the issues of the 1920's: Frunze and his adherents were more concerned with doctrinal unity; and Trotsky, with organizational unity. Both views ultimately prevailed.

The principle reasons for the development of a completely regular army were the increased unity of command and internal discipline. The high value which the Bolsheviks attribute to "the compact and steel ranks" of the Soviet Army may be seen in many passages the words of which probably would not be used by a Westerner to describe his nation's army.²

In addition to organizational unity, the prerevolutionary Bolshevik Party demanded absolute and undivided loyalty. All loyalties and values, which in the West may be divided among political, religious, social, intellectual, and business aims and groups, are united in the sole permissible loyalty. The supreme value is the advancement of the Cause of the Party. After the Bolshevik Revolution, this value was extended to the state as a whole (the army naturally being an early objective in this extension). This totalitarian process and product is too well known to require description here.³ The current apparatus for and methods of this process in the contemporary Soviet Army are discussed later.

Unity is not only sought, but is anticipated as being the manifestation of the assumed unanimity obtained by the allegedly scientific Marxian method of decision-making. Disagreement thus can be but thinly disguised hostile action aimed at destroying this monolithic unity. The Bolshevik fear of fragmentation and isolation is pronounced: a fear not only that the much-sought unity may be dispersed and weakened, but that the enemy may even subtly dominate one's action by this means and make one a "tool" by provoking a desired course of action by means of infiltration and deception. Hence, the Soviets attempt to annihilate, *do kontsa*, any vestige of disunifying tendencies or divisions. Thus, too, themes of monolithic compactness, absolute unity, unshakeable determination to carry things *do kontsa*, imperviousness to infiltration, and vigilance against provocation are stressed in Soviet writings of exhortation and of self-praise.

In war, as Lenin said in 1918, “The Soviet republic must be a united battle camp, not only in words, but in deed.”⁴ The recent war is said to have “knit together” into “one united battle camp” the front and rear.⁵

The Soviets, who tend to view the enemy in the image of themselves, are strongly concerned with destroying the enemy’s unity by all measures and at all levels. On the strategic level, politically, the Soviets seek to utilize all contradictions or conflicts [*protivorechie* means both] within “the enemy camp” by stirring up all disagreements abroad in the world. This is an old Bolshevik principle often voiced by Lenin and Stalin.⁶ Similarly, the enemy organization is infiltrated at all levels where feasible. The enemy “apparatus,” as it is termed, is infiltrated for the very purposes which the Soviets so fear themselves—for weakening of effort (and even aim) by internal division and disruption, for espionage, and for Soviet use by the planting of diversions and the twisting of its actions by provocation to the unwitting service of Soviet aims. In combat, efforts are made to destroy the enemy’s unity by analogous means. The flanks and rear of the enemy force are attacked to split units at the point of least effective unity of command and eventually to destroy them in detail after isolation by encirclement.

The Fallacy of the Single Weapon

Bolshevik thinking, as we have seen, combines political and military aims and means and, further, uses *all* means which are considered feasible and appropriate. This flexibility in the selection of means, military and nonviolent, to achieve political objectives precludes reliance on any one form of struggle.

Likewise, Soviet military doctrine emphatically rejects reliance on any one type of combat force. Soviet doctrine and practice relies especially on ground troops, but this reliance may not be excessive in view of the immediate and intermediate aims of the Soviets and their resources and geographical location. The foundation of the Soviet armed forces is a closely knit combination of infantry, armor, artillery, and tactical airpower. Naval forces, the strategic air force, airborne troops, partisan groups, and others are supplementary; in some cases they may acquire local predominance, but

in the over-all picture they are supplementary to the combined land-front avalanche of mass and momentum. Major General Talensky stated: "The Red Army showed in action the insufficiency of one-sided military theories on the decisive superiority in combat and operations of any one type of troop. The positive experience of the Red Army has proved that the basic tasks of strategy are decided by the operating art and tactics on the basis of the all-sided use of all types of troops, of all technological means of struggle, depending upon their qualities."⁷ The Soviets attempt to utilize *all* types of forces, as they claim, on the basis of their particular characteristics. They believe that the above-mentioned combination of land forces, including air support, is the basic combination of forces.

Two particular trends in Western military thought have been strongly attacked: the Fuller-Hart-Guderian emphasis on mobility and surprise of tank formations, and the Douhet-Mitchell-Seversky reliance on airpower (especially strategic). Both tendencies have been so strongly opposed that on occasion purges of excessively enthusiastic adherents have occurred.

Two recent passages will illustrate this line of thought.⁸ Major General Isayev wrote, in 1949, that prior to the recent war,

... military thinking in the capitalist armies, under the influence of unresolved class contradictions and the adventuristic nature of their war aims, displayed an erratic and extravagant predilection for one-sided development, now of the air force (Douhet), now of the tank force (Fuller), and to underestimate the importance of the artillery, infantry and other services; or for passive defensive strategy and tactics (France). The last word in these modish capitalist theories was the German-fascist offensive strategy and tactics of invasion armies, which sought to decide the issue of war by the operation of tank "wedges," underestimating the value of other forms and means of warfare, and underestimating also the role of strategical reserves in modern warfare.

As we know, all these onesided theories and vagaries of military thought resulted for the capitalist states only in bitter disillusionment and great catastrophies.⁹

And Marshal of Aviation (and then commander in chief) Vershinin declared, on the occasion of Air Force Day in 1949:

The doctrines of Douhet, Fuller, and their German proponents have been fully refuted, namely that in modern conditions war may be won solely by means of a strongly developed and abundantly equipped Air Force or Tank-force, or by both taken together. The underestimation of the infantry reflects the fear of the imperialist bourgeoisie before their people, before mass armies. The victory of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Fatherland War showed that the wars of the machine epoch are lengthy and ruthless competition between all the forces and resources of the belligerents and that a war can be won solely by means of all the armed services brought to perfection, whose coordinated operations are ably organized.... The revival of Douhet's venturesome ideas by the Anglo-American

warlords mirrors their aspirations of conquest. Not having reliable reserves of manpower at their disposal and searching for obedient cannon fodder in the Marshalized countries, the warmongers boom and exaggerate the role of the Air Force out of all proportion. These venturesome schemes are also based on the calculation that the peoples of the USSR and the Peoples Democracies will be intimidated by the so-called “atomic” or “push button” war. These ideas emanate from the completely distorted view that the outcome of a war can be settled by one kind of weapon alone. History has proved the reverse more than once.

Only Stalinist military strategy yields the correct scientific solution to the question of the main factors deciding the outcome of a war. These main factors are not to be found in this or that armed service; they are formulated in Stalin’s brilliant principle of the permanently acting factors deciding the fate of wars.^{[10](#)}

This “one-sidedness” on the part of bourgeois military thinkers is considered to be adventuristic—a gamble—as a statement of Voroshilov’s in 1939 illustrates by his explanation of the imperialists’ having “placed their stakes” on aviation:

Aviation, that young branch of service, is regarded by all the imperialist armies as a panacea for all military ills. The imperialists have placed their stakes on aviation, and with its aid the bourgeois imperialists and fascist ruling cliques hope to win the next war.^{[11](#)}

It should be noted that these are all public statements, some of them addresses on occasions of celebrations, in which a propagandist[^] purpose is evident. Nonetheless, the experience of the Soviet armed forces in the recent war (operating under this same overtly expressed doctrine) tended to bear out these statements. Strategic bombing, airborne operations, amphibious operations and the like were all regarded as being supplementary to the main combined land and tactical air team. Present organization, as far as is known, continues the former arrangement of autonomous organizations for these types of special operation within the Ministry of Defense.

The most important specific attitude is toward strategic bombing. This arm has, of course, acquired much greater importance since the Soviet acquisition of the atomic bomb, but it has not, publicly at least, been accorded any marked attention relative to that conceded to other elements of the Soviet air forces.

In the postwar years, Marshal of the Tank Troops Rotmistrov and other leading Soviet exponents of tank warfare have been permitted some leeway in extolling this arm (which, incidentally, contrasts with the absence of any open proponent of strategic bombing; perhaps because the Soviet Union is the leading tank power in the world, while the United States is the chief

strategic bombing power). However, the Soviet Army is expanding the number of its mechanized (balanced), rather than tank (strongly armored), divisions.

The Bolshevik principle of seeking “the main link” in a situation is not applied to forms of combat or types of troops; rather, as Vershinin’s speech, quoted above, indicates, “the main link” in military action is considered to be the combined use of all types of forces concentrated at the decisive point and time.

While the Soviets believe that primary reliance on strategic bombing or any other form of combat is impermissible, they would at the same time regard it as inexcusably negligent to ignore the full potentialities of this as of all weapons. Rejection of the “fallacy of the single weapon” is not replaced by the fallacy of rejecting any particular weapon; *all* weapons must be used to their maximum capabilities.

Combined Arms and Cooperation

The Bolshevik stress on unity and compactness of strategy and organization and the rejection of the fallacy of the single weapon contribute to the strong Soviet concern with close cooperation between combined arms of service, or, as the Soviet phrase puts it, “types of troops” [*rody voisk*].

The text on *General Tactics* defines combined action [*vzaimodeistvie*] as follows: “Combined action is that coordination of action of all troops participating in combat, directed toward the best fulfillment of the common combat mission.”¹² As we indicated earlier, this stress on combined action envisions the employment of each or all types of troops as the situation demands and according to their capabilities; but chief reliance is placed on the closely combined land-air offensive.

The 1936 and all subsequent *Field Regulations* have stated:

*Use of each type of troop in combat must be based on an account of its nature and strong points. Each type of troop must be used in close combined action with other kinds of troops in conditions of the maximum utilization of its potentialities.*¹³

The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated:

The Red Army is composed of different types of troops. No one type of troop can replace another; only the combined application and unified force of all types of troops guarantees the securing of victory.¹⁴

Many further statements on the necessity for combined use of arms could be quoted from the Soviet regulations.^{15*}

* This is identical with United States doctrine. The 1944 *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, stated: "No one arm wins battles. The combined coordinated action or team work of all arms and services is essential to success. The characteristics of each arm and service adapt it to the performance of its special functions. The higher commander coordinates and directs the action of all, exploiting their powers to attain the end sought." (See FM 100-5, p. 6, par. 25.)

Soviet military writing since the war has praised the use of combined action by the Red Army and has continued to stress heavily the need for increased combined action.¹⁶ Actually, the level of cooperation between arms was probably as low as in other countries whose doctrine did not stress this principle as much as did that of the Soviets.¹⁷ One former Soviet officer interviewed by this author gave this explanation for certain specific failures of cooperation: "Of course, the idea of combined action was only born in this war." However, a former Soviet air force officer of field grade interviewed by this author declared that prior to the war theoretical acceptance of the need for closely combined arms was so thoroughly ingrained that airmen, even in private conversation and discussion, accepted this doctrine without question.

Part III of this study contains an examination of the Soviet employment of land, air, and sea power, combat under special conditions of climate and terrain, and partisan warfare. In these discussions, forms and practices of combined action in tactical and operational field doctrine and in the experience of the Soviet-German war are discussed in detail. As will be seen, the infantry has been considered to be the central basis of a primary combat team comprising infantry-artillery-armor-tactical-air, both in the offensive and in defense.

Even prior to the recent war, there existed a special section of the Operations Administration (Division) of the General Staff for coordination of the arms, representatives of all arms of service being included. In peacetime, this group and the various Military Districts coordinated arms. In wartime, coordination was basically at the Front (Army Group) level, but it extended down to division level.

During the war, the typical organization of combined action for a Front was effected as follows: the order for an operation, specifying the objective, general means of achieving this objective, and coordinated moves by neighboring Fronts was given to the Front commander. Planning for this operation was then implemented in operational detail by a group composed of the Front commander (usually infantry), his chief of staff and operations officer, and the subordinate tank, artillery, and tactical air commanders. A detailed tactical plan was then worked out, including a time-mission chart given to all these commanders and subject to revision only by the Front commander in case of a serious change in the situation. A much-simplified sample planning chart is given below, omitting assignment of specific unit missions on the basis of the main blow, auxiliary blows, and holding actions.

Planning Chart for an Offensive (Simplified)

| Operation X | 0400 | 0430 | 0500 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Infantry | Initial positions for attack | Launch assault | Seizure of first line |
| Tanks | Concealed in close rear positions | Initial positions | Assault through infantry |
| Artillery | Preparatory barrage on first line | Attack on enemy second line | Assault on enemy third line |
| Air | Attack on enemy reserves | Attack on enemy third line | Attack on enemy fourth line |
| Reserves (operational) | Conceal or cease movement | Concealed move-up of reserves | Second echelon with tanks |

Combined Troop Command

Special attention is paid to developing command techniques and in particular to commanders who are capable leaders of combined forces. The 1936 *Field Regulations* placed the burden of combined troop command at the lowest feasible level—the battalion: “The role of the battalion commander in the organization of combined action of the infantry with

artillery and tanks is exceptionally important, and decisive for the success of the attack in offensive combat.”¹⁸

This level was clearly too low to be effective, so the 1940 *Field Regulations* stretched from the overprecise to the overgeneral and concluded that “The organization of combined action constitutes the most important obligation of all commanders.”¹⁹ Major General Gapich wrote in 1940 that “the first and basic peculiarity of command ... is minute organization of combined action of the types of troops on the field of battle.”²⁰

General Fomichenko, in a typical statement of the ideal sought (but rarely attained) in Soviet military affairs, wrote:

In the course of the war they [Soviet officers] have become masters in the art of coordinating the action of troops and experts in directing them; and they have outmatched their adversary by their superior knowledge and intelligence. The Soviet infantry officer has an excellent general military training, but at the same time he is well versed in the use of artillery, aircraft and tanks, and in military engineering. This enables him correctly to coordinate the action of troops on the battlefield.²¹

Major General Subbotin also discussed this problem from the standpoint of the combined troop staff. He stated:

The role and significance of the combined troop staff as the unifying and guiding center of command in connection with this has significantly increased. In its hands are concentrated all the threads of command both in the combat leading of troops, and in their technical preparation. It determines the objectives and basic means of command in coordination with the tasks of the command, coordinates and directs the activity of the special staffs and services in relation to the general objective. This concentration in the hands of the combined troop staff of all the activity of the complex apparatus of command in the combat leading of troops and their supply is a direct consequence of the centralization of command of different types and very numerous troops.²²

In general, infantry commanders head the combined forces in the field, usually at a high command level—the Front (Army Group). At lower levels, each major combat formation has its own channels of command, with continuous liaison.

Air-ground combined action is a regular aspect of the actions of both the VVS (Army Air Force) and the ground forces. Specific points of command and coordination are discussed later in detail in relation to their employment; in general, tactical “Air Armies” are subordinated to ground Fronts, and all lower-level air units up to the Air Army have their own independent channel but with considerable liaison between themselves and corresponding ground

force units at all levels. As the 1942 *Manual on the Employment of Bombardment Aviation* stated: “The best means of establishing the combined action of aviation with ground troops is constant personal contact of aviation and combined troop commanders, and planning together of infantry, artillery, tank and aviation actions, by stages of combat.”²³

Combined naval-land operations present a special problem in command, since such arrangements must necessarily be *ad hoc*.^{*} The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated: “The order of subordination of troop and naval commanders depends upon the character of the combined operations....”²⁴ Command is generally vested in the senior over-all ground force commander; this is invariably so on internal waterways. In a joint naval-ground-force amphibious operation, the senior naval commander is usually in command until the landing has been effected, when the senior army commander assumes command of the landing force. In some cases friction has resulted: Col. General Odintsov told how the naval artillery officers in the battle of Leningrad in 1941 failed to understand the need for their subordination to ground commanders.²⁵ As Admiral Belli stated, perhaps wistfully, most important is “the need for mutual understanding in all command levels.”²⁶

^{*} There is no equivalent in Soviet regulations to the explicit provision of the U.S. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, that “Command of a force of combined arms is vested in the senior officer present eligible to exercise command.” (See FM 100-5, 1944, p. 32, par. 114.)

CHAPTER 13

LEADERSHIP, PLANNING, AND

COMMAND

The strong current in Soviet military doctrine stressing unity of national strategy and strategic design has significant effects upon all levels of planning and command in the Soviet armed forces. Soviet military writing frequently mentions “the united strategic plan” or “united strategic design of the High Command” and characterizes the operations of the Soviet-German war as being “all interconnected by a single and monolithic strategic design.”¹ Pursuant to the Soviet conception of unity of doctrine and organization, a really necessary concomitant is the concentration of all initiative in decision-making at the very top level for unity of planning. The result is that at the *VoYtbnto-Stavka* level there is a very desirable flexibility of planning and complete initiative of action; but this is purchased at the expense of lack of initiative and flexibility at all other levels of command. Personality plays its role in determining the degree of initiative at lower levels, but within a more limited scope than in most current Western armies. Front (Army Group) commanders usually enjoy and exercise some operational freedom, although relatively less than in current Western armies; but at all lower levels the incidence of stereotyped fear of initiative is much greater, indeed more the rule than the exception. For example, former Lt. General Rieckhoff of the *Luftwaffe* has written that “The lower echelons of tactical command were often lacking in resourcefulness and the ability to act independently according to the situation.”²

The Germans recognized both of these aspects of Soviet command. While disdainfully, and not unjustly, comparing the Soviet army or division commander’s initiative with that of his German equivalent, they recognized the true ability of the *Stavka* and Front level commands. As one high German

military source wrote: “The higher echelons of command proved capable from the very beginning of the war and learned a great deal more during its course. They were flexible, full of initiative, and energetic.”³

Before discussing top level and field command, a brief discussion of Stalin’s role seems advisable. Material on which a complete picture could be based is lacking, but certain important clarifications can be made.

Stalin: Man and Myth

The tendency in Soviet writing to ascribe all progress, or claimed progress, in any realm to “Stalin” creates a very difficult problem for one interested in an objective picture of Stalin’s personal role. In the image of Stalin presented in the public press, Stalin the person and Stalin the symbol are confused and intermixed. This blurring of the boundary between man and myth, when intentional (as it must be in many cases), is done with the purpose of identifying Stalin with all that is good and, at the same time, with all that is powerful. This “popular image” of Stalin exists at virtually all levels, except presumably in nonpublic statements of his closest political colleagues, who tend even in public utterances to differentiate between the man and the myth and to be more moderate and describe him rather in terms of Bolshevik virtues.*

* The Politburo members’ speeches on the occasion of Stalin’s birthday in 1949 have been analyzed in terms of images of Stalin, and only a small group composed of Malenkov, Molotov, and Beria continued to use the more moderate “Bolshevik image” of Stalin as wise Party leader and to differentiate between Stalin the man and Stalin the symbol; the others presented the “popular image” of Stalin as omnipotent and omniscient and confused the term “Stalin” in its references to the person and to the symbol. (See N. Leites, E. Bernaut, and R. Garthoff, “Politburo Images of Stalin,” *World Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 3, April, 1951, pp. 317-339)

Even Stalin apparently considers himself as a symbol at times. At public gatherings, when given an ovation, Stalin always joins in, presumably applauding that which is symbolized in him.

The use of the phrase “the name of Stalin,” implying its symbolic role, is frequent. Sometimes it is explicitly stated to be a “symbol,” “banner,” or “sign.” As Voroshilov wrote: “The name of Stalin is a symbol of the morale-political unity, combat capability, and unswervingness of the armed forces of our land.”⁴ In the speeches made on the occasion of Stalin’s seventieth

birthday anniversary (1949), several such explicit statements were made. Malenkov and Molotov both wrote that “the name of Stalin is the great banner” for the world peace movement.⁵ Bulganin declared that “The name of Stalin became for the Soviet troops the symbol of the greatness of our nation and its heroism.”⁶ Many other examples could be cited.

The term “Stalinist” [*stalinski*], although occasionally in the “popular image” referring to Stalin, usually indicates merely achievements under the regime which Stalin heads, rather than personal accomplishments. In some cases this can be seen very clearly; for example, Kaganovich once spoke of “Comrade Stalin and the compact, collective Stalinist leadership.”⁷ Frequently the term “Stalinist” and statements of Stalin’s authorship or action refer to situations in which it is very likely that Stalin participated, but without creating or accomplishing alone the things for which he only is publicly credited. We have previously reviewed (in [Chapter 2](#)) his writings on military science and strategy, on the basis of which Soviet military doctrine is frequently termed “Stalinist military science.” These writings, which are the full extent of his contribution to military doctrine, are barren of theoretical contributions. Yet it is even said, by Soviet professional military men, that “There is not a single aspect, not a single problem, of military art which has not received its further development from Comrade Stalin.”⁸

While it is absurd to believe that, in Major General Isayev’s words, “In Comrade Stalin alone does modern history see for the first time a great leader who combines the genius of a statesman and military leader,”⁹ it is clear that Stalin did participate to a very considerable degree in Soviet strategic planning. This does not mean that the extreme claims of Soviet writers are true; it is probable, however, that they are exaggerations of a very real role played by Marshal Stalin. In one of the more sweeping of these statements, Marshal Bulganin declared: “Comrade Stalin himself directed the course of every operation. Every day, and sometimes several times a day, he verified the execution of his instructions, gave advice and amended the decisions of commanders if this was necessary.”¹⁰ But in another passage of Bulganin’s we see a different picture of Stalin’s role, one in which he appears as a participant in planning along with the top military leaders. The following is a very revealing statement:

All the operations during the Great Fatherland War were planned by Comrade Stalin and were carried out under his guidance. There was not a single operation, in the working out of which he did not *participate*. Before finally *sanctioning* any discussion with his immediate comrades-in-arms

*Comrade Stalin made it a rule to hear the opinions and proposals of Front, fleet and army commanders, and in this displayed his characteristic sensitiveness and attention to all the comments and proposals that were made.*¹¹

This statement corresponds to what we know of the operations of the *Stavka*, or GHQ, which Stalin headed and which, with his participation, probably in the manner described by Bulganin, conducted the strategic planning of the war. Stalin himself, in discussions with top Allied representatives, frequently spoke of his colleagues and in at least one instance deferred a matter at least ostensibly until he could discuss the question with his advisors.¹² This merely refutes the more gross exaggerations of the Soviet public picture; his general strategic leadership cannot be doubted, as the record of all inter-Allied conferences confirms.

Stalin's known role in the Civil War (since much exaggerated by the Soviets), in which he constantly overrode his commissar functions and made military decisions (not always with success, as in Poland in 1920), is one indication of his bent toward active military planning. The wartime reports of Churchill, Hopkins, Harriman, General Deane (Chief of the U.S. Military Mission) and others have amply demonstrated the detailed military information at Stalin's fingertips, and their accounts of his proud showing of private military films and tours of his map room (adorned with portraits of old Russian military heroes) indicate both his interest and participation in planning military operations and his pride in being a military leader, the generalissimo. This concern on the part of the political leader for military planning was not unique, especially in the Second World War. Roosevelt at least kept abreast of military affairs to a considerable degree, and Churchill's advice to his military commanders and active participation in strategic planning are well known. Stalin participated to a very considerable extent in military planning, and with undoubted authority for which he would never need to be publicly accountable; but he apparently did not permit his judgment to be so swayed by pride that he interfered against the advice of Shaposhnikov, Zhukov, Vasilevsky, and the field commanders, as did Hitler in German planning.

Stalin's general strategic ability is beyond dispute; one illustration is Churchill's high tribute to his ability swiftly to grasp the strategic implications of a new plan.¹³ This same ability doubtless characterizes his reception of the ideas and plans of his brilliant military advisors, such as Marshals Zhukov and Vasilevsky.

In the early days of the war, Stalin, both as man and myth, kept well in the shadows of the Kremlin walls. It was Molotov who announced the invasion and war, and not until July 3, 1941, was Stalin heard. (His speech produced a marked effect; Stalin addressed the population with unprecedented intimacy as “Brothers and Sisters!” As one former Soviet official remarked to this author, “The Boss must have been in a pretty bad way to call us brothers and sisters.”) Throughout the war, although in decreasing degree as the danger lessened, Stalin remained in the background, as compared with his postwar propaganda role. When the Guards designation was established in October, 1941, Stalin is reported to have insisted personally that the words “For Stalin” be dropped from their slogan.¹⁴ Not until after the fall of Germany did Stalin assume the title “generalissimo” and accept the award of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Even the extreme statements of the Soviet press rarely credited Stalin with field commands, aside from general statements that he “directed all operations.” For example, in his eulogy on the occasion of Stalin’s seventieth birthday, Voroshilov spoke several times of the operations being conducted “under the leadership of Stalin” (or the High Command). He stated, at the conclusion of his review of the war: “The above presentation far from exhausts the wealth of operational-tactical problems so successfully solved *under the High Command of Comrade Stalin by the excellent Soviet generals...*”¹⁵ The *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, in its lengthy treatment of the Soviet-German war, mentions Stalin’s name twenty-two times, but only *once* in discussion of the actual planning and executing of a military operation (Moscow). In this same article nineteen generals and marshals are mentioned, a number of them several times, in relation to specific operations.¹⁶ The only specific operations concerning which Stalin is mentioned are Moscow and Stalingrad (and one reference to Smolensk). Stalin is admitted not to have been at Stalin-grad, and if mentioned at all in regard to that operation he is usually said merely to have “directed” it¹⁷—a claim made probably in recognition of his role there as defender of Tsaritsyn (its former name) in 1919, of its present namesake role, and of its symbolic importance in turning the tide. The other operation in which Stalin is accorded a particularly important part is the Battle for Moscow in the winter of 1941. Bulganin mentioned only this one specific operation where Stalin is said to have commanded. He wrote: “The *whole course* of this greatest battle was *commanded* by Comrade Stalin *personally*.... In the battle for Moscow the

wisdom and heroism of Comrade Stalin was displayed with *special force*.¹⁸ He also referred in this passage to Stalin's withholding reserves from the Front commander (Zhukov) in this same operation (admission of the existence of whom at least modifies strongly the claim that Stalin "personally commanded" the whole course of the operation),¹⁹ This was also the sole operation in connection with which the *Encyclopedia* used Stalin's name, and then merely to state that "On December 6, 1941, by order of J. V. Stalin, the counteroffensive of the Soviet troops began."²⁰ The 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat* also mentioned Stalin but once, as issuing the order for the battle of Moscow.²¹ Moscow was the only specific operation in which Voroshilov mentioned Stalin; and, finally, Army General Shtemenko, Chief of Staff, stated in his speech at the same time that Stalin "personally" led this battle, and again this is the only specific operation in connection with which he mentioned Stalin.²²

It seems possible, therefore, that Stalin did play a more active role in this battle than in others. However, the symbolic significance of this battle, staving off German victory in an hour of crisis, may have suggested that he be accorded personal credit for the victory. In any case, the field forces were under the command of Marshal Zhukov, and Marshal Shaposhnikov doubtless played a significant role in planning the operation.

A key to Stalin's "direction" of these battles is found in Bulganin's account of a visit by Stalin to the Smolensk Front in 1941. He made the following statement:

To verify on the spot the readiness of our troops for a given operation, he [Stalin] himself visited the fronts. Before the Smolensk operation was launched, he visited the Western Front. On his arrival at Front Headquarters, he verified the readiness of the Front commander and the troops for the forthcoming operation, gave exhaustive and infinitely clear instructions concerning the disposition of forces, and saw to it that they were supplied with aircraft, tanks, artillery and all other reinforcements and supplies. He drew the commander's attention to the individual stages of the operation, to the different phases of the development of military operations. As a result of this, the commander obtained a clearer understanding of the significance of the forthcoming operation and, as we know, it was conducted with great success in complete conformity with the plan sanctioned by the *Stavka*.²³

If we ignore the hyperbolic praise of Stalin's interference, it is likely that this picture is substantially accurate.

Stalin's general role in military affairs is not entirely clear. It is apparent, however, that his concern with military matters was very great, and that on the other hand he could not possibly have done all the things attributed to him.

The scope of matters with which he is said to have been occupied is indeed, as Bulganin once said, “amazingly wide and all embracing.”²⁴

In the matter of weapons and materiel development alone, Stalin is said to have done very much. General Kotin reported on a conference of Stalin’s with the two leading tank designers in 1938, at which time Stalin pointed out the need for increased armor, decreased turret size, and new treads, which led to the KV heavy tank, later developed into the Stalin tank.²⁵ Marshal Vershinin declared: “There was not an aircraft, not a motor, which was not inspected by Comrade Stalin in blueprint, model, or in the finished product. Demonstrating exceptionally intimate knowledge of aviation, he gave concrete instructions on each aircraft.”²⁶ Marshal Bulganin stated that “The whole of the vast work to produce armaments and to supply them to the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, was conducted under Comrade Stalin’s direct guidance. He himself went into all the details of the production of new types of weapons. Under his direction conferences of engineers, airmen, tankists, artillerymen, naval men and leaders of our industry were convened to discuss problems connected with the construction of new types of aircraft, tanks, artillery, warships and other war requirements.”²⁷ He describes this further with particular reference to the war and gives one example, which is a key to understanding what is meant by the more sweeping general statements:

Comrade Stalin constantly inquired how the various types of weapons were employed in battle and how effective they were; from the information he received he drew the necessary practical conclusions. In August 1941, when fierce fighting was raging near Smolensk, on one of the sectors of the front an enemy battalion that had confidently and arrogantly launched an attack was exterminated with a volley of rocket-propelled mortar shells (“Katiushas”), which at that time were not yet being extensively used. The effect of this type of weapon was so terrific that it drove the Hitlerites into a panic. On learning of this incident, Comrade Stalin at once gave orders to have this type of weapon manufactured on the widest possible scale. Within a short space of time rocket mortars became most widely employed by our army.²⁸

During the war, Comrade Stalin studied in detail the designing and introduction of new and improved types of weapons, particularly artillery, tanks and aircraft. He consulted scientists, engineers and heads of armament factories and set them definite tasks in the production of new types of weapons. He gave every encouragement to the innovators’ and rationalizers’ movement in industry and inspired the workers, engineers, and technicians to creative effort.

Two other quotations are of interest in this regard:

Stalin is a master of detail... he has an amazing knowledge of such matters as the characteristics of weapons, the structural features of aircraft, and Soviet methods even in minor tactics.²⁹

Stalin surprised me with his knowledge of our planes. He knew details of their performance, their characteristics, their armament, and their armor much better than many of the senior officers in our own air force.³⁰

These last two statements were made not by some Soviet sycophant, but by highly qualified American observers: the former, by Major General Deane, head of the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow during the war; and the latter, by General Arnold, writing from his observations at the Teheran Conference. The accounts by Churchill, Hopkins, and others bear witness to this same wide knowledge of Stalin's of military details.* In view of the fact that some of these matters arose spontaneously, it seems unlikely that Stalin could have been especially briefed on all these details immediately in advance.

* There were also instances of apparent military ignorance on Stalin's part. In September, 1941, he wrote to Churchill: "It seems to me that Great Britain could without risk land in Archangel twenty-five to thirty divisions, or transport them across Iran to the southern regions of the U.S.S.R." (Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p. 462). This was, of course, patently impossible. Also, in his urgings for and, later, mild deprecation of the cross-Channel invasion, Stalin seemed (according to several Allied sources) to consider a major amphibious landing as being no more than a big river crossing.

In addition to these roles of military theoretician, strategic planner and commander, and weapons development expert, to Stalin is attributed an important role in training and selecting commanders. Bulganin stated:

Comrade Stalin picked, trained and promoted splendid new cadres of Soviet military leaders, who displayed outstanding skill in executing the plans his genius produced. He carefully studies and picks our military cadres and personally knows our generals, admirals and numerous officers.³¹

Finally, his "paternal concern," both in this rearing of officers and for the soldier, is praised. Again, turning to Bulganin:

Comrade Stalin has always displayed and is displaying today constant paternal concern for the rearing of military cadres and to their training in the spirit of selfless devotion to the Bolshevik Party, in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and self-sacrificing service to the people.

.....

Throughout the whole course of the war our Soviet soldiers constantly felt the great care and solicitude of their leader. Comrade Stalin called upon all commanders to take care of their men and to cherish every single one....

Comrade Stalin always devoted great attention to the conditions of the rank and file of the army and navy. He inquired into their scales of rations, the quality of their kit and the weight of the weapons each soldier had to carry. In his orders he repeatedly pointed out that care for their men's food and living conditions is the sacred duty of commanders, that they must strictly see to it that the men actually receive all the provisions they are entitled to according to regulations, and that well-prepared and hot food be supplied in proper time to the men in trenches, fire points, and dugouts.

Thanks to the constant attention Comrade Stalin paid to matters concerning material supplies for the troops, our soldiers at the front were well fed and comfortably and warmly clad.³²

Such is the image of Stalin's personal solicitude as presented in Soviet propaganda.

The High Command and *Stavka*

Upon the outbreak of war a radical revision of the high command was effected. From June 30, 1941, to September 19, 1945, a State Defense Committee [*Gosudarstvennyi Komitet Oborony*, GKO], consisting of five to eight members of the Politburo* headed by Stalin, replaced the *Sovnarkom* ("Council of Peoples' Commissars"; since March, 1946, the *Sovmin*, "Council of Ministers") as the direct authority over all Commissariats engaged in defense work.*

* The original members were Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Malenkov, and Beria. Later, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, and Voznesensky were added, and in 1944 Bulganin re-placed Voroshilov.

* See Appendix I, pp. 411 ff, "The Organization of the Soviet Armed Forces," for the general relation of the military organizations to one another and to the government as a whole, and concerning the internal organizations of the Ministries of War, Navy, and Internal Affairs. A brief review is also given of personnel changes and occupancies in the high command and at the ministerial level.

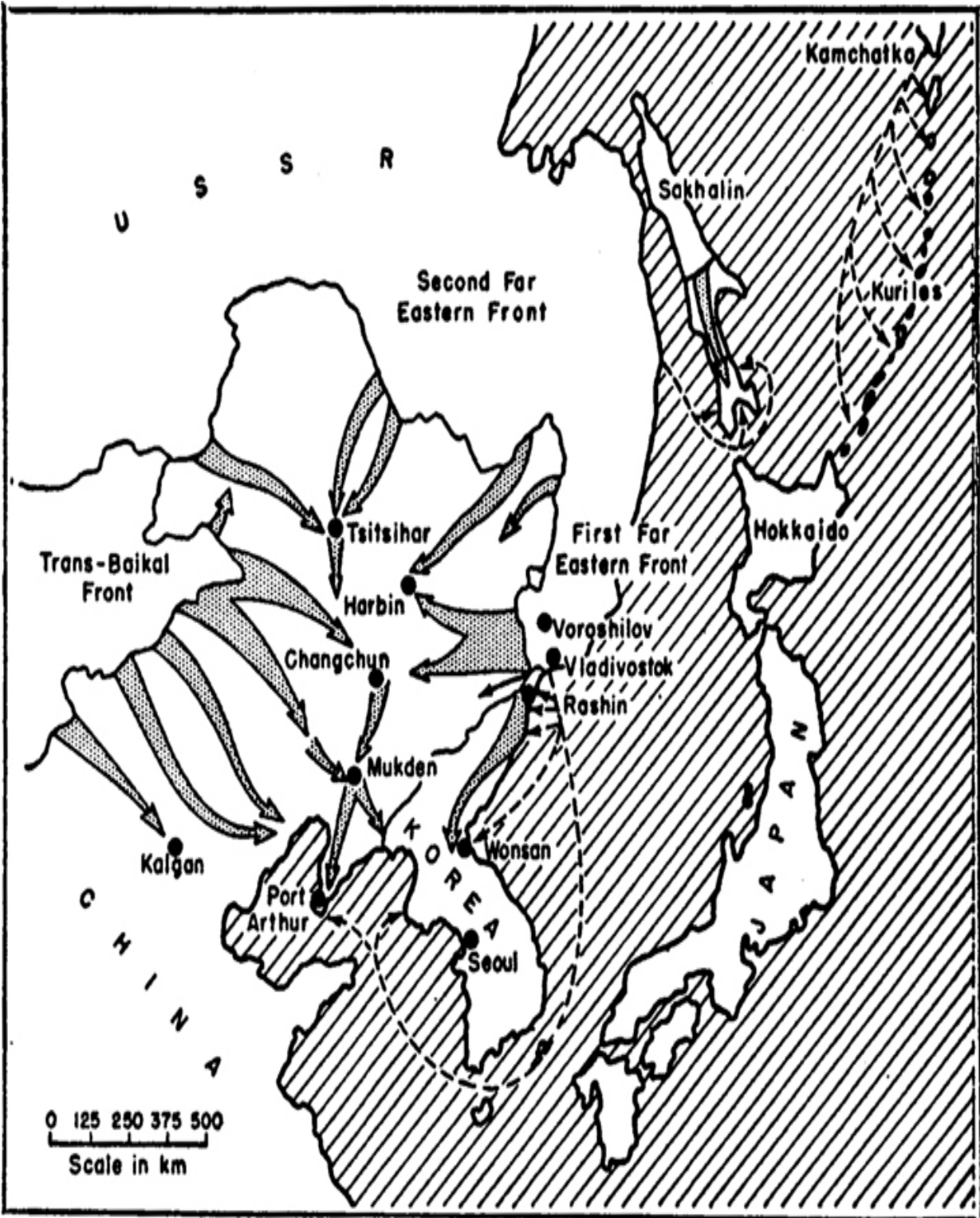
Stalin assumed the title of Marshal of the Soviet Union; on July 19, 1941, that of Peoples' Commissar of Defense; and in August, 1941, that of Supreme Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the USSR [*Verkhovnyi Glavnokomanduiushchi Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR*]. He played an important personal role, but not the all-encompassing one usual in the Soviet popular adulations.

Directly under Stalin and the GKO was the *Stavka*, or GHQ, a select personal staff of twelve to fourteen top military officers who advised Stalin and had the task of developing over-all strategic plans for the conduct of the war. The Chief of Staff was one of these officers, and the General Staff was subordinated directly to the *Stavka*, having the tasks of providing information and detailed operational planning for it. In 1946 the *Stavka* was again abolished, and the General Staff assumed the function of war planning.

High officers on the *Stavka* were often assigned to direct complex operations themselves while remaining on the *Stavka*.

Marshal Zhukov, who was Chief of Staff from February to October, 1941, and who headed the *Stavka* during its entire existence (from 1942 to 1946) as First Deputy Commissar of Defense to Stalin, personally commanded the Moscow counterblow of December, 1941; the November, 1942, Stalingrad offensive; the Orel, Belgorod, Kursk, Kharkov, and Smolensk operations of the summer and fall of 1943; the First Ukrainian Front in its advance of March-May, 1944 (replacing the fatally stricken Vatutin), taking Vinnitsa, Cernauti, and Tarnopol; and, finally, the First Belorussian Front from December, 1944, to May, 1945, sweeping from the Vistula to the Oder and on to take Berlin.

Marshal Vasilevsky also served on the *Stavka* throughout its entire existence as Second Deputy to Stalin and Chief of Staff after November, 1942. He directed a number of operations and personally commanded the Third Belorussian Front (replacing the dead Cherniakovsky) from February to May, 1945, taking Koenigsberg; and in August, 1945, he directed the Far Eastern campaign.



The Soviet Far Eastern Campaign (August 9-23, 1945)

The brief and highly successful Far Eastern campaign demonstrates their success in coordinating Fronts. The over-all planner and commander of the campaign was Marshal Vasilevsky. The First Far Eastern Front was commanded by Marshal Mcretskov; the Second Far Eastern Front, by Army General Purkaev; and the Trans-Baikal Front, by Marshal Malinovsky. Amphibious operations were

carried out as indicated by the dotted lines and arrows, and small airborne attacks were employed in the Changchun and Mukden areas and in northern Korea. This is based on a Soviet military-historical map.

There are other examples: Marshal Timoshenko, who served on the *Stavka* in 1943 and 1944, directed the liquidation of the massive encirclement at Kishinev; and Marshal of Artillery Voronov conducted the artillery offensive at Stalingrad in November, 1942. Most of the other field commanders of just renown did not serve on the *Stavka*. In addition to those mentioned above, the *Stavka* included Marshal Shaposhnikov, the Chief of Staff from October, 1941, until severe illness forced his retirement in November, 1942, who probably organized the *Stavka* at its inception.* General A. E. Antonov served as Vasilevsky's Deputy Chief of Staff and, as Vasilevsky was frequently in the field directing major operations, was its *de facto* routine chief. Antonov later became Chief of Staff for a brief period in 1945. According to Major General Deane, who as head of the U.S. Military Mission in Moscow dealt with him a great deal, he is an able man.³³

* According to one source, allegedly a former General Staff officer, Politburo arguments over the question of the evacuation of Rostov, in 1941, led to a decision by Stalin: "To recognize the right of Comrade Shaposhnikov to arbitrate all strategic decisions, on his personal responsibility." (See Ivan Krylov, *Ma Carriere a L'Utat-Major Soviitique*, Paris, 1949, p. 171.) There is no confirmation of this report, made by a source of undetermined reliability. It is, however, plausible that such a general attitude was taken.

Some of these officers were "career staff officers" who never held important field commands, such as Army Generals Antonov and Shtemenko; others were top experts in broad technical fields, such as Marshal of the Engineer Troops Vorob'ev, Marshal of the Signal Troops Peresyarkin, and Army General Khrulev, Chief of the Rear. Similarly, there were technical chairmen for the combat arms, including Admiral Kuznetsov (then, and again at present, Chief of the Naval Staff); General (later Marshal) Fedorenko, an armor expert; Marshal Budenny, a cavalry expert; and Generals (later Marshals) Novikov and Golovanov, aviation advisors.

The old personal friends of Stalin, such as Voroshilov, and the "political" generals, such as Bulganin, were not included. The *Stavka* was organized, and apparently very effectively, for the planning of war.

We have seen that Zhukov and Vasilevsky, and occasionally others, were often detached temporarily from the *Stavka* for field command.* In other cases, Front commanders were given the operational plan as worked out by the *Stavka* and General Staff, and they then adapted it to their precise situation. Contact between the Front commanders, who almost without

exception in the last half of the war were excellent, and the *Stavka* was apparently both close and smooth. At lower levels, armies, corps (when existent), and divisions were pawns of the higher command, and their officers were usually not particularly gifted or at least were not permitted to adjust plans to tactical changes and unforeseen circumstances.

* In two cases, as noted, the field commander who presumably might otherwise have carried out the operation had been suddenly killed—Vatutin in 1944 and Cherniakovsky in 1945.

It is useful to bear in mind that implicitly in the Soviet conception the *Stavka* was strategic, the Fronts were operational, and all smaller formations were only tactical. The consequences of this arrangement at these subordinate levels are discussed in this chapter. As Major General Isayev wrote: “Operations cannot be directed in modern warfare as they were directed in wars of the past. Comrade Stalin was prompt to discern a new feature in modern strategic leadership: he [in fact, the *Stavka*] united our armies into compact mobile groups, and took over direct supervision of the joint operations of these groups of armies.”³⁴

The term High Command or Supreme Command [*Verkhovnyi Komanduiushchit* or *Glavnokomanduiushchii*] refers, in fact, to Stalin and his *Stavka*. As we have previously seen, although it is very difficult to determine the actual role of Stalin in the strategic planning of the war, it is probable that he treated the *Stavka* as a wartime “military Politburo” of top experts and leaders who would present the alternative variants and the supporting facts to the *Stavka* for discussion; and, when proposed plans were clearly set forth, with arguments pro and con by the members, Stalin would decide and the matter would be closed. Conclusive data confirming or contradicting this view are lacking, but it seems on the basis of the indirect record to be the most likely explanation.³⁵ In peacetime, the work of the *Stavka* was not necessary, and it was abolished in 1946, the General Staff assuming such of its functions (war planning) as remained.

The General Staff

In our survey of the influence of Imperial Russian military doctrine on Soviet doctrine, it was pointed out that this influence was considerable. The relatively large number of former Imperial General Staff officers who came

into Soviet service exerted strong influence on General Staff organization.³⁶ The present Soviet General Staff differs in one respect; there is no formal permanent General Staff corps of officers, although in fact there is a tendency toward one.³⁷ There is evidence that the General Staff carries special prestige; e.g., Major General Deane has told how, in discussions of planning with American advisors for the Far East campaign, Lt. General Slavin of the General Staff took the chair, even though he was the junior Soviet officer (one marshal being among the others present),³⁸

One of these former Imperial General Staff officers, Boris Shaposhnikov, was Chief of the General Staff from October, 1941, until serious ill-health required his resignation in November, 1942 (he had previously held this post from 1919 to 1920, from 1927 to 1931, and again from 1937 to 1940). In addition to these periods of heading the General Staff, Shaposhnikov had participated in the Soviet debates during the mid-1920's concerning the role of the General Staff. Svechin, a former major general of the Imperial General Staff and professor at the Frunze Academy, was the key proponent of a strong General Staff closely tied to the political decision-makers, in fact integrated with them. His work on *Strategy* (1926) stressed the need for "integrated strategy." Shaposhnikov provided a fundamental four-volume history of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff (from 1908 to 1916), *The Brain of the Army* (1927-1929).³⁹ Shaposhnikov sought through this detailed (and frequently pedantic) study of a foreign General Staff to prove his and Svechin's thesis: a General Staff must exist as a function, regardless of its name, and it should be recognized as such. He concluded that "The General Staff must occupy a place corresponding to the direction of war and preparation for it... and not a narrow specialist military organ."⁴⁰

It is perhaps of interest that for his title he chose the word *mozg*, which means the physical biological brain, rather than the word *um*, meaning the intellect or thought process, as being analogical to the General Staff. The Soviet General Staff did not evolve into as important an organ as Svechin and Shaposhnikov sought, but they laid the foundations for its development.

There is a tendency, as in other states, to be wary of one-sidedness on the part of the staff as contrasted with the attitude of the line command. Lenin underscored the passage in *On War* in which Clausewitz stated that General Staff officers acquire a one-sidedness by writing military history.⁴¹ The role

of the Soviet General Staff, and in wartime that of the *Stavka*, is nonetheless a very central one.

The current organization of the Soviet General Staff comprises six administrations [*upravlenie*],⁴² two of which are “chief administrations”:

The Chief Administration for Operations

The Chief Administration for Intelligence

The Signal Communications Administration

The Organization and Mobilization Administration

The Topographical Administration

The Historical Administration

The Chief Administration for Operations is the main section of the General Staff, and its head is deputy to the Chief of Staff (as in the German organization). The various arms and services, including the rear services, are represented here by liaison.

The Chief Intelligence Administration (GRU) is responsible for air force intelligence as well as for other army intelligence. It is reported to conflict jurisdictionally with the MVD intelligence service. Counterintelligence is entirely an MVD function, although during the Soviet-German war it was nominally an army chief administration (GUKR).

The Organization and Mobilization Administration is concerned with the matters indicated by its title.

The Signal Communications Administration is the top-level message center.

The Topographical Administration deals with cartographic and similar matters.

The Historical Administration has already been described in some detail in the discussion of the process of developing military doctrine, a function not paralleled in Western General Staff counterparts. It is closely connected with the Voroshilov and Frunze Academies and is responsible for publishing the important classified theoretical military journal, *Military Thought* [*Voennaia My sl*’].

Leadership

There are two conceptions of leadership in Soviet thinking: one, inspiring, initiating, and directing; the other, implementing and directing in accordance with a plan.*

* Linguistically, this distinction is not clearly made. The common word for “leader” [*rukovoditel'*] means the former conception rather than the latter function; but Soviet military commanders, except for a few high-level exceptions, are usually restricted to the essentially nonleadership functions of the second category. The discussion following will clarify this point.

There is but one *vozhd'*, Stalin. In Soviet history, Lenin was the first *vozhd'*, and Stalin was his closest disciple. All knowledge, foresight, wisdom, and ability is said to exist in him (in the synthetic popular folklore), and in fact initiative is closely held at this level.

Subordinate commanders are all charged with guiding the implementation of over-all plans as determined by the *vozhd'* and his advisors (the Politburo or the *Stavka*).

Our discussion of the High Command and *Stavka* has shown the work of the *vozhd'* and his associates (the latter may strongly influence the real decision-making but remain relatively out of the public picture). The field commander is not permitted to gain approbation beyond the satisfaction of and honors bestowed by the *vozhd'*; the only Soviet field commander to achieve a role even remotely challenging the unique position of the *vozhd'*, Marshal Zhukov, was promptly denied any opportunity to maintain or increase his position as soon as the war was ended.*

* There are other rumors, but this reason seems to be the most likely. Zhukov was not liquidated, as he doubtless would have been had there been real suspicion of his loyalty; rather, he was transferred to less conspicuous posts of secondary, but not negligible, responsibility—command of the Odessa and later the Ural Military Districts. In addition to being sent to remote commands, public mention of Zhukov declined to almost zero. For example, in the *Pravda* commemoration of the third anniversary of the taking of Berlin (May 9, 1948), no mention of Zhukov was made. Similarly, he was given a minute role in the recent Soviet film “The Taking of Berlin.” But the sudden appearance in Poland of Zhukov, delivering a widely reported speech (July 22, 1951), and his election as a Candidate Member to the new Central Committee of the Party (October, 1952) demonstrates that he is available if he is needed again.

The role of Stalin the *vozhd'* as myth, intended to inspire the people, has been noted before; presumably many of the Party devotees and former leaders who were purged in 1936-1938 agreed to confess to crimes they had not committed in order, as a last service to the Cause, to enhance the figure of Stalin as a symbol inspiring greater monolithic unity in the Party and the Soviet Union. (No marshals or generals participated in these abject public trials.)

Stalin and the Soviet leadership in general are, at least theoretically, well aware of the need to “maintain close contact with the masses,” as Lenin frequently put it. Stalin once declared:

We, the leaders, see things, events, people only from one side, I would say from above; our field of view must necessarily be more or less limited. The masses, on the other hand, see things, events, people from the other side, I would say from below; their field of vision is also of necessity limited to a well-known degree. In order to gain a correct decision on the question, it is necessary to unite these two experiences. Only in this case will leadership be correct.⁴³

As in the political realm, the *vozhd'*, Stalin, is sometimes presented as interposing and overcoming the shortcomings of the intermediate-level bureaucracy. Bulganin indicated this idea in the previously cited statements concerning Stalin's all-encompassing solicitude for the rank-and-file soldier.

“Leadership” by the top level includes initiating, calculating, planning, and decision-making. It also includes “inspiring,” by use of the myth of the flawless omniscience and omnipotence of the supreme *vozhd'*. Leadership virtues of the top level include the requirements of being able to calculate soberly the relation of forces and to foresee the outcome of events. As Colonel Chuvikov stated: “In time of war the subjective factor has great significance—the ability and know-how to lead, soberly to evaluate the situation, to utilize correctly potentialities, to foresee the course of events.”⁴⁴ This is contrasted with the “adventurism” of the German High Command. Thus, Lt. General Firsov wrote: “The Soviet High Command opposed clarity and definiteness of selected strategic aims, fearless and iron support, wisdom and unhurried strategic decision, exceptional energy in the resolution of large problems to the adventuristic Hitlerite strategy.”⁴⁵ Stalin's calm concern with the dangers of the war is also cited by General Firsov, accenting another desired trait of leadership: “Heading the Soviet Army in the harsh days of the defense of our Motherland, Comrade Stalin calmly looked the terrible danger in the face, and in the very most harsh and critical days he confidently prepared the destructive blow to the hostile horde.”⁴⁶

The important leadership quality of foresight will be examined more closely in a later discussion of prediction and intelligence. Leadership is expected to include the ability to evaluate the situation correctly, even when the picture is discouraging. As Stalin wrote to Churchill: “Experience has taught me to look facts in the face however unpleasant they are, and not to fear to express the truth however unwelcome it may be.”⁴⁷ The conscious

calculation of risk is similarly regarded. In another message to Churchill, Stalin wrote: “in wartime no important undertaking could be effected without risk or losses.”⁴⁸ Stalin has always paid considerable attention to the need for utilizing opportunities or potentialities [*vozmozhnosty*]. To cite but one example, he wrote: “In the histories of states, in the histories of armies, there have been cases when all opportunities for success, for victory, existed but these opportunities were wasted, because the leaders did not note their opportunities, did not know how to utilize them, and the armies suffered defeats.”⁴⁹

It should be noted that these are the qualities sought of the top leadership; at lower levels, morale factors and ideological promises require constant optimism and false statements of the fulfillment of unfulfilled popular desires. Leadership at all other levels is not based on these virtues of decision-making, but rather on implementing and executing plans determined on by the top leadership. This does not mean that initiative at all subordinate levels is stifled completely, although the doctrine does not favor initiative except in fulfilling missions assigned.

Stalin has declared that command is one of the “permanently operating factors,” or basic principles, of war. The form in which this principle is stated is revealing: “the organizing ability of the command personnel.” Soviet commanders are not expected or permitted to exercise initiative in strategy; the Soviet distinction between “strategy” and “the operating art” takes on meaning in this respect. It is the duty of the field commander to *organize* and to *implement* operationally the plan of the High Command, the *Stavka*.

Stalin himself defined tactical leadership as follows:

Tactical leadership is a part of strategic leadership, subordinated to the tasks and the requirements of the latter. The task of tactical leadership is to master all the forms of struggle... and to assure their correct utilization in order to achieve the maximum results obtainable with the relative strength of forces available, the maximum necessary in preparing for strategic success.⁵⁰

As we shall see in our discussion of orders and field command and initiative, this “organizing ability” is primarily manifested in “making more precise” (i.e., relating to the immediate tactical moment) plans decided upon by a higher command, and tends to discourage initiative.

The supreme requirement of all subordinate leaders and commanders is loyalty; this is interpreted as total lack of tolerance for the slightest suspicion

of independence of aims. In this way the monolithic unity of plan, organization, and action is maintained.

Orders and Regulations

Civil War experience demonstrated the need for clarification of channels of command and communication. In 1922, Shilovsky, who has risen to lieutenant general on the General Staff, admitted that this problem had become even more sharp in the Red Army than it had been prior to the Revolution.⁵¹ He noted that as early as 1917 difficulties had arisen over the fact that a “written order” became a “document” with delegated powers. As in the prerevolutionary Russian Army, “documents” [*dokumenty*] were divided into “orders” [*prikazy*] and “directives” [*direktivy*], the latter delegating to the recipient more freedom of decision in implementation. In the period from 1918 to 1920, an order had to pass through five to seven persons (commissars, staff officers, etc.) in order to reach the operating level.⁵²

The Bolshevik insistence on clarity of channels and instructions was pitted against this legacy. Frunze understood very well that military organization demands “Special clarity, precision, completeness, endurance, speed of fulfillment of all instructions....”⁵³ Soviet military doctrine has, therefore, strongly stressed purposefulness, precision, and clarity of orders. The 1936 *Field Regulations* stated:

In giving an order, the overall commander must direct particular attention to a clear and precise formulation of the general tasks of the formation (unit), expressing the fundamental idea of the decision taken, that is, the direction of the main blow for the achievement of the concluding aims of the battle.... The art of composing an order consists of being able to express the salient and categorical idea of the battle in several words.⁵⁴

This reflects and corresponds to similar demands upon the work of commanders and their staffs... orders issued must be so clear that misunderstandings will not occur. Officers drafting orders must apply their energy, knowledge, initiative, and brains to the task.”⁵⁵ The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated that “An order sets forth clearly, concisely, without the motivation, but in such a way that the subordinate understands the mission assigned to him.”⁵⁶ The 1944 *Field Regulations*

stated: “Purposefulness of decision and clarity of mission is the basis for command.”⁵⁷ The 1942 *Manual on Field Service of Staffs in the Red Army* stated: “The staff must be distinguished by organization, clarity, and flexibility in its work.”⁵⁸

“*The basic act of command is the taking of a decision by the commander,*” stated the 1940 *Field Regulations*. “*A decision must be activated firmly and without hesitation.*”⁵⁹ We have seen before the strong requirement to carry out to the very end all decisions taken. The 1940 *Regulations* warned that “Any change of a decision when there are not adequately serious grounds for doing so is impermissible, and bears witness to absence of a firm will in the commander.”⁶⁰ This emphasis on “will” is manifest; on all levels but the very top, this means will in the service of the higher design, and not initiation. This stress on implementation is very important; as Major General Subbotin wrote:

The setting of tasks is distinguished by great clarity, and expresses not only will—“what I wish,” but also “how I wish,” from the point of view of combined action and the means of achieving the aim. Particularly in that direction has the organizing function of the command most clearly grown.⁶¹

Above all, “*The greatest mistake of the command is not to decide on anything, or to decide too late.*”⁶²

There was a brief exchange in the journal *Military Thought* in 1946 attempting to clarify “the working out of decisions.” Colonel Solntsev suggested:

To clarify the mission means to analyze: 1) the nature of the general situation, in order to understand the tactical thought of the established mission in the light of the general circumstances ...; 2) the plan of actions of the senior commander; 3) one’s own task, as part of the general plan; 4) the tasks of neighboring units.”⁶³

Solntsev also sought the establishment of “elements of the situation” as a basis for decision-making. A few months later Lt. General Dashevsky and Major General Bronevsky replied. They wrote:

We consider it possible to recommend a more simple and at the same time more purposeful, order of clarifying the mission: 1) To clarify the combat task of the senior instance at the higher levels. 2) To understand the place and role of one’s unit (formation) in the plan of combat actions of this senior instance. 3) To clarify the task of neighboring units and the order of combined action with them. 4) To clarify the tasks of second and subsequent echelons of higher instance, and the order of combined action with them in the process of developing the battle (operation). 5) To clarify the tasks of the

types of troops and conditions of combined actions with them. 6) To separate one's task into a series of subsequent tasks, early and subsequent, the fulfillment of which secures the fulfillment of the task set by the senior instance, and leads to the achievement of the main objective of the battle (operation).

In conclusion of this article, we state our understanding of working out decisions of the command. ... 1) Evaluation of the enemy; 2) Evaluation of one's own forces; 3) Evaluation of the terrain; 4) Evaluation of time.⁶⁴

Both these articles bear witness to the central importance placed upon clarifying and understanding the senior command's plan and the place of the subordinate part of the plan within it. This does not, however, mean that the subordinate command must only understand its mission and then plan the operation of its unit on the basis of the task and relative capabilities. Soviet orders, even at very high levels, are not usually of the American "mission" type used for higher commands, but specify in considerable detail even the framework and means for implementing the task assigned; indeed, the mission (and motivation) may not be fully explained to the subordinate commands.*

* Soviet doctrine does not permit the subordinate commander to determine *how* his mission is to be fulfilled. This is very different from United States doctrine, as the following quotation from the U.S. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, indicates: "*An order should not trespass upon the province of a subordinate. It should contain everything that the subordinate must know to carry out his mission and to further the mission of the next higher unit. It tells the subordinate what to do but not how to do it.*" (Italics supplied.) (See *FM 100-3, 1944*, p. 40, par. 153.)

The 1936 *Field Regulations* laid the basis in Soviet doctrine for the content of an order [*prikaz*]:

1. The first point of an order gives a compressed characterization of the action and the general grouping of the enemy (as the deduction from the latest intelligence data, without enumerating the data themselves).
2. The second point shows the tasks of the neighbors and the boundaries (delineation lines) with them.
3. The third point gives a formulation of the general idea of the battle of the unit and following from this ... [the tasks of each arm].
4. The fourth point shows the place of the first command point and the direction of its advance; that direction at the same time being defined as the axis of communication.
5. The fifth point shows the region of exchange points.

The task of the higher unit (in a divisional order, the task of the corps; in a regimental order, the task of the division) is not shown in an order.⁶⁵

In 1946. Major General Subbotin, in an analysis of command in the Soviet armed forces, stated:

The content of the basic documents planning a contemporary operation is distinguished usually by deep foresight and concreteness. They include not only an analysis of the situation, plan, decision, and tasks by stages, but also complex organization of the operation—its preparation, execution, and material preparation. An Army operation is planned in particular detail in respect to determination of time, place, subsequent actions, and the combined action of troops. A combat order, reflecting the nature of centralized command, rigidly stipulates the immediate and subsequent tasks by defined boundaries, objectives, and time.⁶⁶

General Subbotin also pointed to the important role of oral communication in command. He stated:

Documents cannot be a brake for the beginning of work, which is determined by means of personal contact.

In practical work, very often no written documents are given out until a defined time, in the interests of preserving the planned measures in secrecy, and all work is conducted by means of personal communication. Preliminary oral statements and unit orders become more living. Due to this the mobility of command has grown....⁶⁷

Another source also stated that “Experience showed that the most flexible method for assigning missions was not the combat order, but personal combat instructions.”⁶⁸

In practice this is not easy because of the reluctance of most officers of field or even general grade to assume responsibility for an action without a written *dokument*. The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* did formalize oral orders on low levels. They stated:

Battalion, company, and platoon commanders, ordering orientation, give orders only orally.

Regimental commanders give orders on the spot orally, but if time permits, in written form.⁶⁹

Only at the top level do plans present the design and mission and permit the commander to adapt them flexibly to the changing situation. Usually, only Soviet Front commanders (if indeed even they) were permitted this opportunity. The stress on overconcrete and detailed instructions at lower levels in order to ensure the fulfillment of subtasks of the plan has the effect of creating and perpetuating the underlying assumption of the incapability of these intermediate and lower commanders to use initiative in carrying out a general task. At the top levels, this mission-type plan is devised by the *Stavka* and elaborated by the General Staff, but flexibility in adaptation to meeting the unforeseen is given (in cases of absolute necessity). Major General Korkodinov expressed this plan as follows:

The plan of an operation is not a document, but a series of documents.... The basic document presents the motive-decision of the command, containing the design and general plan of the operation (worked out in its stages and aims), the exposition of which is predetermined by the characteristic of the task and the evaluation of the situation.⁷⁰

Even at this level, the plan is expected to envision such alternative changes as may be required and to provide for dealing with them. Korkodinov stated: “The plan of operations must be flexible in order that it can be supplemented or altered as this is required by the developing situation. For that *the makers of the plan must possess insight [prozorlivost’] to foresee the possible change of circumstances and to prepare in that case the corresponding measures*”⁷¹ Note that it is the top-level planners, and not the field commanders, who are expected to “foresee” possible changes of the situation and introduce corresponding alternative measures into the plan itself.

Orders and regulations emphasize strongly the necessity of exact compliance with them. As the 1944 *Field Regulations* require, “It is necessary to execute an order with complete intensity of forces”;⁷² we have noted the emphasis on carrying through any order “to the very end.” The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated:

*Exact, timely and incontrovertible fulfillment of orders is the fundamental combat activity of the commander. In the face of a sharp change of conditions and impossibility of realization of orders the commander must act on his own initiative. Insufficiency of orders of the superior cannot serve the commander as justification for inaction [bezdeiatel’nost’] in battle.*⁷³

The 1948 Soviet *Disciplinary Regulations* stated: “Military discipline is a strict and exact observance by all military men of the order and rules established by the laws and military regulations.”

An order from a superior is law to the subordinate. An order must be fulfilled absolutely, exactly, and immediately.⁷⁴ And in the oath of allegiance, as given in the 1946 *Internal Service Regulations*, the Soviet soldier pledged that he would “fulfill absolutely all military regulations, and orders of commanders and superiors.”⁷⁵ Stalin, in his wartime orders of the day, occasionally restated this requirement.⁷⁶ It is constantly reiterated that the regulations are “the law of the soldier’s life.” As one writer recently stated, “To live by the *Regulations*, constantly to strengthen discipline and order, is *the most important duty* of Soviet warriors.”⁷⁷ Major General Kovalevsky explained that the reason for this is that in Soviet military regulations “is

compressed the underlying foundations of Soviet military science and the many years experience of the construction of the Armed Forces of the Soviet State, and above all the experience of the Great Fatherland War.”⁷⁸ Occasionally, too, the Soviet officer and soldier are warned not to make a fetish or stereotype [*shablon*] out of the regulations. But the meaning of these injunctions, despite occasional statements asking for “a creative approach,” is clearly that they are to be regarded merely as being general guides. As one Soviet colonel put this—accurately, but indicating the absence of a real, practical role—“Stalinist military science ... *in principle* is opposed to stereotypes....”⁷⁹ This issue is true of all armies and doctrines, and in combat usually resolves itself according to tactical necessities of the moment; but nowhere does it exercise such an effect or become such a problem as in the Soviet Army. This will become clear in our discussion of initiative in the field.

Field Command and Initiative

Soviet field commands shifted in organization during the Soviet-German war. At the time of the invasion, there were three vast unwieldy “Fronts”: one under Voroshilov, the Northwest Front; one under Timoshenko, the West Front; and one under Budenny, the Southwest Front. (Zhukov replaced Timoshenko, who in turn replaced Budenny, in October, 1941). Later in 1941, the command was divided into the Leningrad, Volkov, Northwest, Kalinin, West (Moscow), Southwest, South, and Caucasus Fronts. From then on changes were frequently made, but a large number of “Fronts” remained; at the maximum, there were seventeen “Fronts” or Army Groups. In December, 1943, they were all renamed, becoming the First, Second, Third, etc., Belorussian, Ukrainian, etc., Fronts. Lt. General Zlobin defined the Front as follows:

In Soviet strategy, unlike that of Western Europe [and the USA], the word “front” is used to designate not only a zone of deployment of troops and the line of battle in a theater of military operations, it is also considered as a distinct operational organization of the armed forces in a theater of war [an Army Group], and is one of the controlling links in the general system of operational direction of the country’s armed forces.

Such an operational combination usually consists of a few field armies, mobile troop formations and fighter aircraft. Now and then it conducts its operations independently, but more often jointly with other fronts....⁸⁰

The Front was usually composed of five to seven armies, with one or two tactical air armies and special artillery and armored formations in support. An active Front totals up to one million men in all. The Front usually extended over a width of 125 to 150 miles and had a depth of 50 miles (250 miles, including the rear zone of operations).

The implementation of close coordination of combined arms creates a complex of high commanders of arms. Major General Subbotin wrote:

In the hands of the command can be found, beside the general reserve, special groups—artillery, tank, anti-tank, aviation, anti-aircraft, engineer—by which only the command personally affects the course of combat actions. The expedient and timely employment of these different forces and means requires many-sided and constant information on the situation. ...

The practice of the recent war has shown that the command usually controls 9 to 12 immediate and permanent subordinate troop commanders. But combined operations of the front and in depth, with an account of neighboring and mobile forces and means of the higher instance, embrace sometimes 15 different commanders.^{[81](#)}

The Fronts began as strategic Army Groups conducting independent operations (all closely related in the *Stavkas* over-all plan, of course), but became merely operational units, several of which were combined in each of the large operations of 1944 and 1945. As Major General Subbotin wrote:

The Great Fatherland War demonstrated that the role of the Front [Army Group] and the Army, as the largest combinations of troops in the conditions of contemporary war, had changed. Now usually only the combined forces of several Fronts, united directly under the guidance of the High Command, execute operations of strategic significance. In the course of the war, in all strategic operations, each Front decided only part of the strategic mission in one or two operational directions, according to the general plan of the High Command. The Army, acting as part of a Front, became in its mission an operational-tactical formation.^{[82](#)}

Lt. General Zlobin also declared:

The contemporary Front became an operational rather than a strategical combination of armed forces, though in some theaters, even in this war, Fronts preserved their strategical importance.

If a huge strategic operation is carried out by several Fronts, the main operational direction for each Front is usually determined by the *Stavka*.^{[83](#)}

When the scope of an operation planned by the *Stavka* is not so great that more than one Front is participating, the Front commander is given more initiative in planning. According to Lt. General Zlobin, in such cases “the Front is vested with the right to choose the direction of its main blow.” In this situation, “The decision and directives of the High Command, determining the

objective tasks and cooperation with adjoining Fronts, are the starting point for the organization of an operation.”⁸⁴ (One concrete example at this level of initiative in making plans or adapting them to a new situation was the decision of the Black Sea Fleet command to alter the location of a landing in forcing the Danube to cut the enemy’s path of retreat;⁸⁵ in other words, it was a tactical adaptation *within* the original plan of the *Stavka*.)

The degree of freedom of initiative given to the commander of an Army (usually three or four divisions, with no intermediate corps) varies with the theater and its role in the war plan. In general, the Army command is given very little initiative in comparison with Western standards. The limitations on Army commanders are much more stringent than on Front commanders. Division and regimental commanders have extremely little initiative.* Only in special circumstances can they make decisions; as one Soviet correspondent put it: “important decisions that cannot be put off for a moment must be made by the division commander himself.”⁸⁶ In most cases, where channels of contact exist, the division command must ask the Army command what to do. The 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat* described the duties of division and regimental commanders as follows: (1) to make more precise the tasks of striking and supporting units; (2) to organize combined action with reserves introduced into battle; (3) to conduct necessary regrouping; and (4) to organize centralized direction.⁸⁷

* General Bradley, commenting on the postwar initiative of Soviet officers in Germany, noted: “American lieutenants were delegated greater authority on the Elbe than were Russian division commanders” (Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier’s Story*, New York, 1951, p. 551).

The same source stated that battalion commanders must (1) learn the situation of the battlefield; (2) make more precise the groupings of the battle formation; (3) locate his reserves and heavy artillery; and (4) make necessary regroupings. Company commanders must (i) conduct personal reconnaissance; (2) make more precise the situation of the battlefield; and (3) organize fire and the capture of objectives.⁸⁸

The central importance of “making more precise” [*utochnit’*] at all levels from company through division indicates lack of initiative and roles that are purely implemental. This is considered necessary by Soviet doctrine. Lt. General Zlobin showed this very clearly in the following passages:

The deployment of troops can be successfully completed only when a *rigid centralized plan* which focuses all necessary regroupings and transfers of troops has been prepared.

*The unified direction of the operations and the operating discipline at all levels in the execution of the plans of the High Command turned out to be the most important prerequisites of our successes.*⁸⁹

Examples of stifled initiative on lower levels are many. Here we shall cite but two, which are general illustrations. During the war, the infantry company was permitted only three formations: a line, wedge, or reverse wedge. Since the war, it has been permitted (as is the battalion) to be echeloned if on a flank.⁹⁰ Similarly, tank units advance in close groups with little deviation in the assigned direction of advance, which usually ensures the success of an attack despite heavy losses, unless too few tanks are left when they reach their objective.⁹¹

Soviet doctrine formally provides for, and strongly urges, the display of initiative. However, even in such exhortations to display initiative, the sharp limits on its exercise are usually indicated. Thus, it is stated in *General Tactics*:

Display of initiative is one of the most important conditions for success in battle; preparedness to take on oneself responsibility for a bold decision is a basis of actions for all commanders in battle. *Display of initiative cannot go contrary to the general decision of the senior commander*, but on the contrary, must by all means enable the best fulfillment of the mission.⁹²

The chief reason for stressing the importance of initiative despite the very narrow limits to which it is confined in practice is the fear of making a stereotype or fetish out of orders and patterned formations. This fear is justified in a system requiring only implementation of the plan dictated from above and attaching such heavy sanctions to responsibility. Major General Fomichenko, in an account for public consumption, stressed this initiative in a way strongly at variance with our knowledge of the record of the war, to which we shall turn in a moment. He wrote:

The Soviet officer displays constructive initiative, resourcefulness, daring, and originality in the application of combat methods. He eschews anything stereotyped and always tries to plan an engagement in a way that will take account of the condition of the enemy, his possible modes of action, the nature of the terrain, and his own strength and resources.⁹³

Soviet writing, when it occasionally lays claim to nonstereotyped action, usually does so in a rather awkward fashion, in words such as these: "It is necessary to note that in planning the blow and in its execution it was not stereotyped"; "Naturally, different means of cover are adopted not according

to some formula, but according to an account of the concrete circumstances ...”;.. not only is any stereotype impermissible, but the command works out several variants.. and “It is necessary to flee from patterned disposition of battalions and companies on hills, with borders between them in the dells.”⁹⁴

The record of the Soviet-German war showed a particularly high lack of initiative in combat. German accounts stressed this; the following passage from a reliable high German military source points it out:

The inflexibility of Russian methods of warfare was evidenced repeatedly, and could be illustrated by countless examples. Only the top Russian command during the last years of the war was an exception. This inflexibility manifested itself as high as army levels; in divisions, regiments, and companies it was unquestionably the retarding factor in the way they fought. A division boundary was a sacred wall, and a neighbor's interest halted at his side of that wall. The senseless repetition of attacks, the rigidity of artillery fire, the plotting of lanes of attack and movement without regard to terrain, all these were additional symptoms of this inflexibility. The oft-intercepted, frantic query, “*The enemy has broken through! What shall we do?*” was characteristic. Only a few subordinate commanders knew how to help themselves when the situation presented them with surprises of that nature. The leaders displayed a certain flexibility in their frequent shifting of units in the front lines.

This same source did admit that, particularly on the lower levels,

[In some] instances the Russian often relied only on his intuition, which he substituted for his practical schooling. It must be conceded that this tactical instinct often stood the Russians in better stead than the theories of many academies could have done. The soundness of many an action which at first seemed surprising to us, often had to be recognized at a later time.⁹⁵

Colonel Ely also noted how officers were rigidly bound to plans and instructions from higher commands, usually assigning terrain objectives, and constantly feared misconstruction on the part of the political deputies. He stated that training schools were endeavoring to instill tactical initiative, but without apparent great success.⁹⁶

Numerous examples of this unusually pronounced lack of initiative could be cited; a few illustrations are given below. In 1941 an attempt was made to encircle the German LIII Corps east of Bobruisk. Although one arm of the envelopment was defeated, the other continued the maneuver for 3 weeks when it should have been withdrawing.⁹⁷ In August, 1943, in the battle for Kharkov, the Soviet Fifth Tank Army, attempting to fulfill the plans of the High Command, continued attacking despite its demonstrated inability to break through the enemy defenses, with resulting heavy losses (420 tanks in 3 days)

and without attaining its objective. The same high German military source previously cited indicated a striking case of this:

Toward the end of September 1941, in the area southwest of Briansk, the same sector was attacked by various Russian battalions every day for seven days running without any apparent reason and without success, but with severe losses. Finally, a captured battalion commander supplied the explanation. In looking through some old files, their new regimental commander had found a top-level order to the effect that continuous attacks were to be made along the entire front in order to ease the pressure on Leningrad. Since he had received a negative answer to his inquiry as to whether these attacks had already been made, he had ordered this sector attacked every day. In the meantime, however, two months had passed, and the pressure on Leningrad had long since been relieved.⁹⁸

This source also indicated one instance of Soviet command determination which, while not fully successful and quite wasteful, did effect some success:

... there ensued a sharp clash between the commander of the Briansk Army Group in Yelets, who was in command there, and the commander of this cavalry division. According to captured documents, the following happened: The Army Group Commander ordered the cavalry division to proceed by a forced march to the Orel-Tula road, a distance of sixty kilometers. The cavalry division commander made a written reply stating that this was impossible, because twenty percent of his horses were completely unshod, and of the remaining horses eighty percent had no hind shoes, and twenty percent no fore shoes. For that reason the division was unfit to move. Thereupon the higher commander repeated the order for the forced march in no uncertain terms. The cavalry division started out, but actually went only forty kilometers. It had then reached the end of its tether. At any rate, it had effected a connection with the front and extended it. The iron determination of the Army Group Commander had not achieved the desired success, but nevertheless it^w had created new difficulties for us.

A major cause of the generally prevalent fear of assuming the initiative was the strong emphasis on responsibility both in fulfilling orders and in making any move amounting to a changed action. There is nothing unusual in the Soviet definition of command responsibility. For example, the 1940 *Field Regulations* provided: "The commander bears complete responsibility for the condition and combat capability of the troop formation (unit), for the operating leadership of troops and for the success of their actions in combat."⁹⁹

The heavy sanction which accompanies error or failure in the Soviet system, especially when something has been done without express orders from above, is found in the Soviet armed forces. In the early months of the war, General Pavlov, commander of the Western Front, was executed "for losing command of his troops" and for wasting and losing literally thousands of tanks. While both charges were true, his case was far from unique, and his

execution (and those of several other Soviet generals), which was made known as an example, produced fear and indignation.¹⁰⁰ The following illustration of the prevalence of this confusion in the Soviet command during much of 1941 indicates also the attitude of field commanders. In October, 1941, the Soviet Fiftieth Army under General Petrov was withdrawing, badly shaken, northeast of Bryansk (where it was ultimately trapped by the German LIII Corps). During this period, General Petrov was given command of the newly formed Bryansk Front, to include the Thirtieth and Thirty-third Armies, in addition to the Fiftieth. (This was shortly after the execution of General Pavlov, whose Front was being redistributed.) General Petrov was soon thereafter killed in fighting in the Bryansk pocket. Found near his body was the corpse of State Security Major Shabalin, and in Shabalin's diary there was a very revealing passage:

I congratulated General Petrov at breakfast upon his appointment as Commander of Army Group Bryansk. General Petrov answered only: "So now they are going to shoot me *too*." I replied: "How can you talk of shooting? Your appointment as commander of the Front is an indication of confidence in your ability to get things organized again." General Petrov: "How can I get the situation back under control when I don't even know where the Thirtieth and Thirty-third Armies are and what condition they are in?"¹⁰¹

Many Soviet officers displayed outstanding initiative and ability in the face of such difficulties, and success usually was favored regardless of the methods used, so long as it corresponded to objectives of the plan of the High Command. *It is not the display of initiative itself which is punished*, so long as the initiated action is not at variance with instructions, *but failure owing to initiated action*. Successful initiative may even be praised; but the risk is heavy. The average Soviet general, like his field grade or company grade subordinate, was usually very cautious about doing anything not specifically ordered, and especially about altering orders to meet changed circumstances. This dilemma of command has not been solved by Soviet doctrine, which continues to ask for initiative, but permits it only within narrow confines of "making precise" detailed plans and orders from above. It is important, however, to note that the degree of freedom of initiative in combat is very much greater than that under peacetime garrison conditions, and while it is significantly below the level in highly developed Western armies, the Soviet officer takes this for granted and is much less indignant about this state of affairs than an American officer would be if similarly restricted in command initiative.

Another aspect of field command and leadership is the combat location of officers. Until sometime during 1942, the regulations stated: “The company commander directs his company in combat at its head, by personal example and through group direction....” A certain degree of flexibility, however, was permitted: “In offensive combat the company commander is found wherever it is most favorable to carry on observation of the enemy and to command the company...,”¹⁰² During 1942 this was changed because it “led to unnecessary losses” and did not permit “adequate observation of battle.” The 1942–1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* and 1944 *Field Regulations* changed the previous combat location for platoon, company, and battalion commanders and ordered them to remain in the rear of their troops. Thus,

Only in exceptional cases in combat conditions do the regulations permit the commander of a platoon, company or battalion to advance in front of their formations and personally to lead their detachments into battle.¹⁰³

The regimental and division commanders were also required to remain at the rear in their command posts in order to direct combat from there.¹⁰⁴

Field Staffs

We have seen the scope of field command and initiative; within their confines, the staff performs many important functions, as in all modern armies.

The staff of a division or other formation has a chief of staff and several deputies, the most important of whom is the *zampolit*, or Deputy Commander for Political Affairs. In the absence of the commander, the chief of staff is in command, and only he has the right to give orders in the name of the commander.¹⁰⁵ As of 1942, and believed to have remained unchanged since that time, a field staff was composed of six sections:

- Operations
- Intelligence
- Communications
- Cadres (Personnel)
- The Rear (Services)
- Topography

An auxiliary Administrative-Economic unit was also included.^{[106](#)}

The operations section is most important. Within it,

The fundamental organizational unity of the operations section is the so-called “direction” [*napravlenie*], that is, the working kernel concerned with all questions of an operational character in each formation, immediately subordinate to the given command.^{[107](#)}

This “kernel” [*tacheika*] is composed of three or four commanders, one or two of whom are tied closely to intelligence.^{[108](#)}

One of the most important functions of staffs is the planning and arranging of effective combined action. Their general role in this has been noted in our discussion of combined troop command. It should be noted that, according to Major General Miasnikov, in contrast with the prewar delegation of such planning to corps or divisional staffs,

Now the organization of combined operations of formations of different types of troops with the most complete effectiveness can be executed only at Army level. Corps and divisional staffs only make concrete [jvc] the combined operation of troops.^{[109](#)}

In general, the role of field staffs in gathering intelligence, drawing up plans, and other functions approximates the duties of any modern staff.

Major General Miasnikov pointed, in 1946, to a shortcoming in flexibility and mobility in keeping “direction” over advancing troops: “Current swiftly developing operations make essential a re-examination of the methods of staff work from the standpoint of increasing their flexibility, mobility, and ability to preserve continuous direction over their troops.”^{[110](#)} This shortcoming was not owing to a failure on the part of the Soviets to recognize this problem before and during the war, but to a failure to solve it. In 1940 Colonel Gapich had pointed out the importance of flexibility in command and communications owing to the increased mobility of troops.^{[111](#)}

The staff, as in other armies, has the task of transforming the general design into the appropriate concrete operational and tactical plans. As Major General Subbotin wrote:

The experience of the war, from the point of view of leading troops, confirms that creative activity (design, foresight) of the command is most successfully transformed into an expedient decision (organization), if the staff has completely and correctly prepared all the material necessary for it. Besides that, correctness of decision and its execution depend directly on the organizing ability of the staff.

The staff, by its organizing influence and control penetrates the very lowest links and is concerned in the organization of “details.”^{[112](#)}

Officer Status

The early Bolshevik abolition of officer ranks continued in effect in progressively diminishing force. In 1935 the rank of marshal was introduced (almost all the original marshals were liquidated 2 years later), and in 1940 other ranks were reintroduced. In 1940 the salute was also reintroduced, and the commissar was reduced to deputy status (briefly abrogated in 1941-1942). In 1942 epaulettes [*Ipogon*] reappeared, and the political officer was again reduced from equality with the line commander to deputy status. Today the Soviet Army officer corps is more of a caste than it is in any other major army. The officer corps has become a privileged class in the Soviet Union, economically and in prestige. Since the war, “culture” and manners have been required and instilled (one frequent by-product of this being the divorce of too “proletarian” wives). Privates must even salute corporals; and company and field grade officers are not considered social equals. The extent of privilege may be seen from the fact that a Soviet major has an orderly, and a general or marshal has a whole personal menage.^{[113](#)} Pay and special privileges mount very sharply; the Soviet private gets the equivalent of only \$6 per month, but the Soviet major general gets \$1630 per month, or more than his American counterpart.

The process of creating a professional officer corps suffered severely in the purge of 1937-1938, in which a very great proportion of the higher officer cadres were removed and in many cases executed. This impressed all Red Army officers with the political nature of any authority in the Soviet Union, and weakened professional devotion as well as the sense of initiative and personal security of the officer corps (in addition to stripping it of much talent). The number of senior officers purged, according to both Japanese intelligence and former Soviet sources, and which was never denied, is given below:^{[114](#)}

| Rank | May, 1937 | Surviving in November, 193 | Purged |
|---------|-----------|----------------------------|--------|
| Marshal | 5 | 2 | 3 |

| Rank | May, 1937 | Surviving in November, 193 | Purged |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------------------|--------|
| Army commander | 15 | 2 | 13 |
| Corps commander | 85 | 28 | 57 |
| Division commander | 195 | 85 | 110 |
| Brigade commander | 406 | 186 | 220 |

All eleven Vice-Commissars of War and seventy-five of the eighty members of the Supreme Military Council, including all the military district commanders, the air force, navy, and all but one of the fleet commanders, were purged. Ninety per cent of the generals and 80 per cent of the colonels are estimated to have been purged, as well as up to thirty thousand other officers: about half of the total officer corps of seventy thousand.¹¹⁵

The beginnings of an even more exclusive officer corps can be seen in the Suvorov school system. These junior military academies accept young boys of eight or nine (including a large number of orphans of Red Army officers). These young cadets are trained for 7 to 9 years, are then sent to an officers' training school for 3 years before being commissioned, and are then sent on for advanced military schooling.¹¹⁶ The naval equivalents of these schools are called Nakhimov schools, both systems being named for famous Imperial officers of yore. This training system was introduced in 1943 and so has not yet demonstrated its effect.

The Soviet Army has retained a disproportionately large number of its wartime officers and is thus able to send many to school, where their wartime experience is enhanced and supplemented.

Promotion is determined by selection on the basis of ability rather than seniority, and the most important qualification of all is absolute loyalty and political interest. This latter criterion in some cases causes high rank to be held by some officers of much lower military worth than their rank indicates, but these cases are not typical. On the whole, the higher Soviet generals are much younger than their Western equivalents; during the war, most of the Soviet field generals were in their early forties. Although in 1941 many high Soviet officers who were not really capable remained from the Civil War period (most of them had been eliminated in the purge of 1937), they were swiftly relieved. In 1942 a play by Korneichuk called *The Front*, which sharply criticized the inefficiency of the older Red Army officers, was widely publicized. The notable exceptions among these old officers of the Civil War were Vatutin, now dead, and Konev.

By 1941 there were nine hundred generals, and during the war this number rose greatly. Stalin, surpassing Napoleon, created twenty-nine marshals; and he eventually made himself a generalissimo.

Most Western observers who had occasion to meet Soviet officers during the war have spoken highly of their general level of ability, despite widespread weakness in initiative, which was largely not their own fault.

Wartime officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers who saw combat and early occupation service in the West have generally been returned to the Soviet Union, reassigned, and “re-educated.” Most of the present officers in occupation armies are younger men without combat experience. This was done, despite the lesser experience of the new officers, to destroy the feeling of comradeship which grew up between company officers, noncommissioned officers, and men during the war. The new officers are more strict and better disciplined; hence they are less likely to defect or to become disillusioned, since they are almost permanently confined to their camps.

Soviet officers, like the soldiers, are subjected to many hours of political instruction in which, for example, it is explained that despite the seemingly friendly gestures of some Americans, the real masters are intent on deceiving the Soviets by lulling them into lack of vigilance and then striking. The fact that this is not true is not readily demonstrable to young officers who never knew any regime except their present one, and most of whom never saw an American or an American newspaper. This political instruction is part of the attempt to prepare them for “the future war” with the West.

CHAPTER 14

MORALE, POLITICAL

CONTROLS, AND THE SOVIET

SOLDIER

The fundamental importance of morale and the need for popular toleration as the minimum condition of the regime's continued existence are fully recognized by the Soviet leadership. The regime relies on three basic means of ensuring popular support: (a) ideo-political *indoctrination* by the monopoly and rigorous use of all channels of public communication and education; (b) *surveillance* by the secret police and their network of informers, and by mutual mistrust between superiors and subordinates ("self-criticism"); and (c) *terror*, in the sense that the threat of force and its actual use are relied on to preserve absolute loyalty and obedience. Thus, the Soviet regime succeeds to a large extent in creating the myth (and much of the fact) of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence in its relation with the Soviet people. This process is even more pronounced in the Soviet armed forces than in civilian life, since physical force (ultimately the instrument of all three forms of political control outlined above) must necessarily be delegated in degree to the armed portion of the populace. While we of the West, particularly of the United States, regard the army as being "civilians in uniform," the Soviets regard civilians as being "fighters in overalls."

The almost unlimited and unchallengeable authority of the Soviet leadership offers it a unique opportunity for influencing morale. This opportunity is seized and used to the utmost. The Soviet leadership is fully aware of the importance of morale in the armed forces and in the "rear," and it has taken bold measures to maintain its power.

It should be remembered that morale is not fully equivalent to discipline, and dissatisfaction does not necessarily lead to desertion or defection. A soldier may even have serious grievances and still obey and remain an effective fighter. Morale, while it is not entirely determined by degree of success or failure, bears a significant relation to the fortunes of war. Thus, in June to December, 1941, although large numbers of Soviet soldiers and officers surrendered, strong and effective resistance was still maintained in continuing retreat. Such resistance was possible partly because of Soviet dependence on authority and command channels, which were quite disorganized in 1941 but intact in 1942. Defection cannot be expected in a situation in which the Soviet Army is winning, even among those who otherwise might wish to leave the Soviet banner.

Before examining the Soviet theory and practice of military morale and discipline, we shall discuss the qualities and loyalties of the Soviet soldier. Although this may seem to be putting the final “result” before its causative factors, this is not so; for although the Soviet soldier is much affected (negatively as well as positively) by the actions of the Soviet authorities, his morale is far from being determined solely by the conscious action of the leadership. By briefly discussing the Soviet soldier first, we may place the Soviet theory of morale and the apparatus and workings of indoctrination, surveillance, and discipline in a more meaningful perspective.

Qualities of the Soviet Soldier

The Soviet soldier is both the raw material and the finished product of the indoctrination and control processes. In this discussion we shall consider him as the latter; influences of these imposed processes will be dealt with in later discussion.

The Soviet soldier manifests four outstanding qualities which are the basis of his combat effectiveness and morale: (1) valor, (2) high level of discipline, (3) ability to endure severe deprivations, and (4) simple and genuine love of country.

These qualities are all recognized and exploited by Soviet doctrine on morale, with the additional (and largely unsuccessful) attempt to instill Communist ideological fervor into the Soviet soldier. In Soviet writing this

fifth factor is most stressed, although the other four genuine qualities are encouraged. All will be briefly discussed here, and the author's tentative conclusions on the actual state of the Soviet soldier's morale motivations will be offered as background for later discussion of the Soviet doctrine and propaganda claims.

The bravery and unselfish devotion of the Russian soldier has been recorded historically many times; it remains under the Soviet regime. Statements in evidence of this are found not only in the exaggerated Soviet claims, but in the sober records of neutral Western observers and the recent German adversary. There are on record many instances of soldiers' hurling themselves with grenades under oncoming tanks or ramming enemy aircraft and tanks with disabled machines when their ammunition was exhausted. Even more important than these spectacular instances of heroism was its wide characterization of the soldiers in general. Suvorov sought to make heroism a tactical principle, and so do the Soviets; and the Russian soldier has shown himself equal to the challenge.

At least as important as his bravery is the ability and discipline of the Soviet soldier to withstand extremely demanding conditions of combat service.* His endurance of deprivations which sometimes would probably be insupportable to the Western soldier is a very significant factor. During the war he overcame great difficulties, including those caused by deficiencies in equipment and supply, as the Soviets themselves occasionally admit.¹

* An English observer wrote in 1698 concerning the Russian soldier: "They also Encamp, Entrench and Lodge Advantageously, being very Patient of Hunger, Thirst and Cold, Obedient to their Officers, and Ready to Charge the Enemy on all occasions" (*A New and Exact Description of Moscovy*, R. Baldwin, London, 1698, p. 19).

It is not possible to get an objective picture by reference to Soviet sources, which idealize this quality. More objective and conclusive was the comment of the British observer, Lt. General Martel:

As regards the men [of the Red Army], they probably provide the best material in the world from which to form an army. First of all, they are mostly peasants, who are used to living in open spaces, and they seldom lose their way. They make good use of the ground and are very clever at concealing themselves. Their bravery on the battlefield is, of course, beyond dispute, but the most outstanding feature is their astonishing strength and toughness.... Reference has already been made to the wonderful endurance of the Russian troops in carrying out those forced marches to escape from the German pincer movement in 1941 when they marched thirty or more miles a day for many days on end and carrying great loads on their backs. There is little doubt that if you took one Russian soldier with a rifle and one German soldier similarly armed and set them against each other the

Russian would win. He would beat him by his toughness and strength. We shall see presently, however, that a Russian unit would have little chance against a German unit of equal strength in the state of training and with the equipment as it existed at that time.²

As early as June 29, 1941, the German *Volkischer Beobachter* admitted: “The Russian soldier surpasses our adversary in the West in his contempt for death. Endurance and fatalism make him hold out until he is blown up with his trench or falls in hand to hand fighting.”³ Although inaccurate in their ascription of “fatalism” and “contempt for death” as motives, the phenomenon of endurance and bravery was quite correctly seen. Most illuminating is the following statement by Field Marshal Kleist describing the Soviet soldier: “The men were first rate *fighters* from the start, and we owed our success simply to superior training. They became first rate *soldiers* with experience. They fought most toughly, had amazing endurance, and could carry on without most of the things other armies regarded as necessities.”⁴

The Soviet picture of “a real man” is one who surpasses in endurance. A postwar novel about a Soviet flyer who is shot down and who performs heroic feats of endurance in returning by crawling wounded for miles in bitter cold is titled *The Story of a Real Man* (by Boris Polevoi; a Stalin-Prize-winning novel of 1946).

The endurance of the Soviet soldier is fully exploited by his superiors. Soviet infantrymen “dig in” to an extent that Westerners would probably find impossible. They are used to hauling guns, supplying the labor for building bridges of logs, crawling for long distances, making long forced marches, going without food, and sleeping on the ground in sub-zero weather. They are able to do this in part because of their civilian background. Most Soviet citizens are not accustomed to a high standard or condition of living; on the collective farm, Soviet citizens are accustomed to hard manual labor and to the rigors of the climate. In addition, the Soviet soldier is well disciplined and obeys without thought of question when ordered to dig emplacements (including alternates and dummy positions) for artillery and tanks, even after a forced march and before digging his own trenches.⁵ This endurance greatly aids pursuit of the enemy.

There is no doubt that the Russian loves his *rodina*, his native land, and that this is the most important motivation in his morale. It is probably correct to state that the Russian soldier fought well during the Soviet-German war because his *rodina* was invaded by the foreigner, and *despite* the fact that

this meant a defense of the Soviet regime also. The Soviets themselves tacitly recognize this. As one writer stated: “The accurate German strategists took everything into account. But in their variegated military terminology they forgot one word and its meaning: they forgot the word ‘Russia,’ and they met their death...”⁶ This patriotism was exemplified in the general bravery and obedience of and endurance of deprivations by the Soviet soldier. The Soviets praise and encourage this patriotic heroism.⁷

This primacy of patriotism, not to Bolshevism but to Russia, was fully recognized by the Soviet leadership. Stalin, in a frank moment of a dark hour, admitted the real source of ability to resist the Germans when he spoke of “the idea of defending their *otechestvo* [Fatherland], which is what our people are fighting for”—a remark made on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution (November 6, 1941).⁸ The slogan of the war, replacing “Workers of all Countries Unite” on the masthead of *Pravda*, was “Death to the German Invader!”—not “Death to the Imperialist (or Capitalist) Invader.” The war itself was called “the Great Fatherland War” [*Velikaia Otechestvennaia Voina*.] On a few occasions it was even termed “the Sacred [*sviashchennaia*] War of the Russian People.”

It is not easy to comprehend precisely of what the Soviet soldier thinks in his love of country; indeed, it is probably not a clear image to him. Mother Russia has always been deeply loved, with a deep, simple love of country of the most fundamental sort. Frequently the Soviets seem to envisage Mother Russia in the image of their local community. Russians as a whole are not xenophobic, as is sometimes stated by foreign journalists, nor do they “like” tyranny; but they do prefer a native tyrant to a foreign one.

Half of the population is still peasant. Peasants form the bulk of the armed forces, particularly the ground forces and especially the infantry. They have one basic dissatisfaction: collectivization of agriculture. Beyond this, they have very little political interest. The urban workers do not, generally, even think of an alternative to nationalized industry; they suffer somewhat more from the pressure of constant indoctrination and surveillance and denial of the basic freedoms of personal expression, but they also are not highly political in their dissatisfactions. It is the Soviet regime itself which, by attempting to politicize all aspects of life, forces these fundamental and just dissatisfactions into a political context to the degree that they become political. But these basic and widespread dissatisfactions are not enough to cause the Soviet soldier to refuse to obey and support the Soviet regime.

Every Soviet soldier takes a special oath of allegiance upon entering the armed forces, and occasionally afterward. Earlier, the soldier swore “to serve the working people”; then, “to serve the socialist country”; and now, to serve the “Soviet *rodina* [‘native land, or Motherland’] and Soviet *pravitel’stvo* [‘Government’].” The text of the present oath is reproduced below:

I, a citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, entering into the ranks of the Armed Forces, take an oath and solemnly swear to be an honorable, brave, disciplined, vigilant warrior, to safeguard military and state secrets strictly, to fulfill absolutely all military regulations and orders of commanders and superiors. I swear conscientiously to study military affairs, by all means to look after military and the people’s property, and to my last breath to be devoted to my people, my Soviet Motherland, and the Soviet Government. I am always ready at the order of the Soviet Government to rise to the defense of my Motherland—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and as a warrior of the Armed Forces, I swear to defend it in a manly fashion, intelligently, and with virtue and honor, not sparing my blood and my very life for the achievement of full victory over the foes.

If I should break my solemn oath, then let the stern penalty of Soviet law overtake me, the general hatred and contempt of the toiling masses.²

The partisans of the recent war took similar oaths also concluding with a statement, similar to the one above.¹⁰ Guards units also had special oaths. The reaction of the Soviet soldier to these oaths is ambiguous and often ambivalent. In many cases they are of course regarded very cynically; but in some cases, especially with a young recruit fresh from the collective farm, the experience of this solemn oath’s being taken by his kneeling regiment may make an indelible impression.

The Soviet leadership has intentionally not emphasized unit loyalties. Although (especially in the Guards units and the elite arms, such as the long-range bombing force) there are unit loyalties and *esprit de corps*, in general these are not basic morale factors. The higher pay rate (in wartime) for the Guards units seems to have been more attractive to the Soviet soldier than pride in elite designation.

The most important actual loyalty besides love for their native land is the sort of informal group tie which grows between men in combat. This loyalty is not countenanced by Soviet theory or favored in peacetime, but it is very important in wartime, when it is even encouraged in combat units. Certain situations, such as must prevail for a tank crew, air crew, or pillbox crew, cause intense primary group ties to develop owing to the sharing of deprivations and dangers; on a less close but significant level, men and officers of any small unit, such as a platoon or company, feel a similar

common tie. Since the war, active rotation has aimed at breaking up such informal (and hence largely “uncontrolled”) comradery. Nonetheless during the war this informal comradeship did much to offset official morale failings. Guards Colonel Alexander Pokryshkin, describing life in his fighter group, wrote in his memoirs about “that combat friendship which always distinguished Soviet flyers. The engagement at Kuban still more strengthened the compactness of the flyers of our squadron. We lived as a close family. The emotion of comradeship entered our code of honor. Danger and hardship taught us to value highly brotherhood and comradeship, fastened by blood. We were merciless to ourselves and sharply reacted to the slightest deviation from those values of flying life which were created in aerial battles.”¹¹

In his loyalties the Soviet soldier is far from the Soviet ideal in two important respects: he is not politically enthusiastic, and he is dissatisfied with many service conditions and complains to himself and his fellows about them. These shortcomings will be discussed briefly in connection with our examination of the Communist theory and practice of morale, indoctrination, and discipline. Our purpose here has been to illuminate the actual outstanding qualities and loyalties of the Soviet soldier for comparison with the Soviet doctrine.

The Communist Theory of Morale

“Morale esprit” [*moral’nyit dukh*] is one of the famous “permanently operating factors” set forth by Stalin. It is closely related to the Soviet conception of “the rear,” which we shall discuss in more detail later. At this point we should note that “the rear” embraces the entire country, and that the Soviets realize, as Voroshilov stated it, that “the rear feeds the army not only all types of supply—ammunition, technology, arms, food, and men; but also with ideas, ideology, attitudes, and morale.”¹² There is no doubt that the Soviets realize well the importance of morale; after all, did not they contribute to, and even more capitalize on, the demoralization of the army of the Tsar?

Morale [*moral’*] is expressed in Russian by many terms: *moral’noe sostoianie* (“general condition of morale”); *dukh* or *moral’nyit dukh* (“morale spirit or esprit”); and *nastroenie* (“general condition of attitude”).

The general conception is not far removed from Western doctrine, although a little broader. Means of creating good morale and evaluation of the relative importance of its determinants, however, vary considerably. For example, the U.S. *Army Regulations* state:

Morale is the mental attitude assumed by the man or men to army life and everything associated with it. Good morale is indicated by a positive drive on the part of the men, a push beyond that which is expected, and an eagerness and enthusiasm concerning the leader's desires. Sound psychology and long experience indicate that the American soldier responds best to leadership which appeals to his pride in himself and his organization.¹³

The Soviets distinguish sharply between their conception of morale and "bourgeois conceptions." As Voroshilov stated:

All the commanders and theoreticians of military affairs in the past also assigned great importance to the morale factor. But they regarded it as an isolated element, unrelated to the character of war, to the social-political, economic, and moral-ideological principles of the warring states, dissociated from the masses of the people—the main source of strength, deciding, in the final account, victory over the enemy.

Much has been written by bourgeois military writers about the morale factor of troops and its importance, but their interpretation of the question of the morale qualities of an army has nothing in common with the treatment of this question by Stalin. Stalin makes the morale factor, the spirit of the army, dependent primarily on the nature of the political aims of the war and consequently on the nature of the social system, the nature of domestic and foreign policy of the given state, on the level of consciousness and culture of the broad masses of the people, on the predominant ideology, etc.

The morale of the army, as Stalin teaches, depends in the first place and above all on the nature of the political aims of the war, that is, what the state is fighting for, on the degree of consciousness of the men and commanders of the army, on the depth of their understanding of the justness of the war which is taking place and the necessity of waging it to save their own country from the attacker, the aggressive enemy, on the depth of love for their Motherland and of their faith in the righteousness of their cause, of their faith in victory, of their faith in the leaders of the country and of the active armed forces.¹⁴

The Lenins-Stalinist conception of a "just" war is repeatedly stated to be the basis of high Soviet morale.¹⁵ The enthusiasm, or elan *ipod'em*], or, as it was occasionally stated in early years of the Soviet regime, the "revolutionary impulse" *Iporyv*]¹⁶ of the Soviet troops in fighting their "just" wars has been pointed to as the result of the Communist ideology.¹⁷ As one Soviet officer put it, "The basic and main characterization of the high morale stature of Soviet officers is their Bolshevik idealism, their faith in the ideas of Marxism-Leninism."¹⁸ In practice, these Communist ideological

motivations are, when positive at all, rarely as significant in morale as is patriotic love of *rodina*. Stalin himself stated that the morale of the Soviet army was higher than the morale of the *Wehrmacht* because “it is defending its native land [*rodina*] against alien invaders, and believes in the justice of its cause....”¹⁹ “Just” war is usually stated in terms of ideological motivations; but any war of the Soviet Union (such as the attack on Finland in 1939) or of its satellites (as the attack on the Republic of Korea in 1950) is considered “just,” merely by virtue of the involvement of the Soviet power. Justice in this sense includes “liberating” oppressed peoples; but the elan of the Soviet soldier depends on defending his native land. Not that the Soviet soldier would not fight, and probably fight well, in a Soviet war of aggression, but he would fight with significantly less enthusiasm than in national self-defense. In both the Finnish and Korean cases, initiation of hostilities by the victims was claimed, which suggests that the Soviet leadership recognizes that the soldier will fight better in (alleged) defense than in a “liberating war” openly begun by the Soviets to rid the “oppressed” abroad of their “exploiters.”

The Party claims all credit for the qualities of the Soviet soldier. As a recent Soviet broadcast of an article in *Red Star* stated: “All their qualities, love of the Motherland, fearlessness in battle, and loyalty to their oath of allegiance, Soviet soldiers and commanders owe to the Bolshevik Party.”²⁰ The term *rodina* (“native land, or Motherland”) is now frequently used by the Soviet press and leaders; this practice is in sharp contrast with that obtaining in the early years of the revolutionary regime. Russian military history is now frequently praised as a forerunner of Soviet military history, but generally it is stated that Soviet “life” has raised patriotism yet higher. For example:

... the Soviet Red Army men not only have inherited the best fighting qualities and proud spirit of the Russian soldiers, but they differ ... as regards their position in society. For Soviet fighters have tasted life in the great commonwealth of free peoples of the USSR, a life for which every officer and soldier of the Red Army is ready to fight to the last drop of blood....²¹

The “internationalist spirit” has not been wholly eclipsed. As the aforementioned broadcast also stated:

In all the languages of the world the words “Soviet soldier” mean an honest, magnanimous, brave, noble man who does not spare his life for the good of the workers, to whatever nation they belong, for Soviet soldiers are soldiers of any army brought up in the spirit of internationalism, of respect for

the people of other countries, in a spirit of the consolidation and maintenance of peace among the nations.²²

Hatred is accepted and used as a legitimate means of stirring morale fervor in a way neither admitted nor equaled in the West. Stalin himself stated, "It is impossible to defeat the foe without learning to hate him with all the forces of one's soul."²³ Lenin, in annotating Clausewitz' *On War*, commented marginally at the passage on national hatred as "seldom lacking" in wars, "only sometimes?" and further, "National hate [is in] every war."²⁴ During the Soviet-German war hatred was constantly fanned by such experts as Ilia Ehrenburg. Sholokov's short story, *Hate*, is a good example; there are countless others. After the war this suddenly changed: Ehrenburg temporarily dropped from sight; and in his greetings to Grotewohl in 1949, Stalin even said that the Germans and Soviets should be particularly close because they had shared the heaviest losses! Colonel Chuvikov wrote the following unusually juxtaposed statement of "a great Red Army tradition": "*Hatred and mercilessness toward the foe. The Soviet people and its Red Army are brought up in the spirit of Soviet humanism...*"²⁵

As we have indicated, the Soviet soldier is not characterized primarily by the same motivations of political enthusiasm and ideological elan that the Soviet leadership stresses and claims.

Considerable attention is paid by the Soviet leadership to the cultivation of high morale. The Party is assumed to play a major role in this process. "Strengthening the morale esprit of subordinates is the very first task of the commander of the Party organization."²⁶ In addition to the Party cells, which are usually quite small in the enlisted ranks, there are Komsomol organizations. One function of these units is proselytizing; another is propaganda within the ranks. In addition, the Party members are supposed to inspire the others by example. As a recent article claimed:

In the days of the Great Fatherland War the Party sent its best sons to the front. As always, the Communists were in the front ranks of the defenders of the Motherland. By personal example, true to the Bolshevik word, they knitted together the ranks of Soviet warriors by organizational work and inspired them by military heroism. The Bolshevik Party knitted together our country into a united military camp. It was the guiding kernel of the rear and front. The Party continued its invaluable work on the ideological-political upbringing of Soviet warriors and workers of the Soviet rear. The Soviet Army, like the whole Soviet people, is indebted for all its victories to the wise Stalinist policy of the Party of the Bolsheviks.²⁷

In addition to the Party organizations, and more important, were the political officers of the Chief Political Administration. They too are expected to be “personal examples of self sacrifice and heroism.”²⁸ At several previous times, these officers were called commissars [*komissar s*] or political leaders [*politruk's*]; they are now called *zampolts* or Deputy Commanders for Political Affairs. Their system of indoctrination is discussed further in the following section; here we should note their central role in the theory of morale building. As early as 1919, the Eighth Party Congress declared: “Commissars in the army are the bearers of the spirit of our Party, its discipline, its firmness and manliness, in the struggle for the accomplishment of the assigned task.”²⁹ *Pravda*, in an article prior to the recent war, defined their role as follows: “The regimental commissar is the political and morale leader of his regiment, the first to defend its material and spiritual interests. While the regimental commander is the head of the regiment, the commissar is its father and soul.”³⁰

The Soviet theory of morale includes a high degree of concern for the soldier. As the 1936 *Field Regulations* stated, “Solicitude for the fighter as a man is a primary requirement of the commander, and his direct duty.”³¹ This was already stressed in the early 1920's, especially by former Tsarist officers, such as Neznamov, Egorev, and Verkhovsky.³² This theme, which follows “in the Suvorov way,” has been repeated in the Soviet military press.³³ We have seen before the important role credited to Stalin in showing “solicitude” [*zabota*] for the Soviet soldier. This “concern” for the soldiers’ life and welfare is contrasted with the alleged attitude and practice of the American Army (as it was during the war to the Germans). A recent article entitled “The Man with a Rifle” pictures the Soviet soldier as “the man with the rifle” in contrast with an alleged American inhuman reliance on machines of destruction and American calculation solely in terms of those machines.³⁴ No mention is made of the fact that U.S. *Army Regulations* present more clearly than do Soviet statements the central role of man in war: “Man is the fundamental instrument in war; other instruments may change but he remains relatively constant.”³⁵ The important thing is not whether Soviet formal doctrine and public self-praise stress solicitude for the Soviet soldier, but whether this solicitude is manifested in practice; the evidence indicates overwhelmingly that it is not.

It is necessary to distinguish between a consideration of the role of the soldier as central tactically and as the object of solicitude. The mass use of manpower to overcome the enemy's firepower is frequent; and while sometimes effective, it is invariably costly in human lives. As one veteran of the Finnish war of 1939-1940 described this:

The basic tactic of the Red Army was to crush the enemy by masses of infantry, following the principle: "They can't kill all." These words were ascribed to Mekhlis, the chief of the Red Army's political department, who was reputed to be one of the leaders in the Soviet Finnish War. I personally experienced this "strategy" of our military leaders.³⁶

He continued, stating that after one unsuccessful mass attack:

The battalion commander, Popov, called all officers together and gave us the following order: "The attack will be repeated! And let's not lie in the snow dreaming of warm beds. The village must be taken! Company commanders will go in support and shoot at anyone who falls back or turns around!"

One didn't have to be a psychologist to know that the new attack, in which the soldiers would have to climb over the bodies of their killed and wounded comrades, would fail.

.....

Of more than one hundred men of my company who went into the first attack, only thirty-eight returned after the second one failed. All of us wondered and worried: What happens now? As if in answer to our question, the battalion commissar, who had taken over when Popov was wounded, called all commanders to him. He held a field telephone in his hand.

"Comrades, our attack was unsuccessful. The division commander personally gave me the order—in seven minutes we are attacking again. Each of you is responsible with his life for the success of this attack. Any minute now we will be reinforced by two machine-gun squads!"

The rest I remember as through a fog. One of the wounded, among whom we advanced, grabbed my leg and I pushed him away. When I noticed that I was way ahead of the men, I dropped in the snow and waited till the line came up to me. There was no fear. A dull apathy and indifference toward impending doom pushed us ahead. This time the Finns let us approach almost within one hundred feet of their positions, but their fire was that much deadlier when it commenced.³⁷

This attack failed also.

This tactic of "the human steamroller" has been briefly reviewed in our discussion of mass. Its morale effects may be seen from the illustration cited above; although the Soviet soldier is ready to die for his country, he is not anxious to have his life wasted by futile attempts such as the one described. Even in such cases, discipline usually remains high, and the attacks sometimes succeed in the end. The Soviet commander (and soldier) accepts heavy losses as the necessary cost of success.

To note but one other example of what we would consider to be a waste of lives, we turn to the Soviet tactic of clearing mine fields. General Eisenhower wrote how Marshal Zhukov explained to him:

When we come to a mine field our infantry attacks exactly as if it were not there. The losses we get from personnel mines we consider only equal to those we would have gotten from machine guns and artillery if the Germans had chosen to defend that particular area with strong bodies of troops instead of with mine fields.^{[38](#)}

Eisenhower aptly remarked later, “I had a vivid picture of what would happen to any American or British commander if he pursued such tactics, and I had an even more vivid picture of what the men in any one of our divisions would have had to say about the matter had we attempted to make such a practice a part of our tactical doctrine. Americans assess the cost of war in terms of human lives, the Russians in [terms of] the over-all drain on the nation.”^{[39](#)}

A further illustration will appear later in this chapter in the discussion of attitudes toward prisoners of war. The Soviet relative lack of concern for their wounded is another example: more attention is paid to the recovery of equipment and vehicles than to the recovery of wounded men.^{[40](#)} These examples illustrate a different way of calculating the cost of war and the requirements of waging war, in part caused by the material conditions which limit the choice of the Soviet leadership. Many Soviet commanders show concern for the lives of their men which equals that of Western commanders. Another example of the Soviet attitude toward men, regarding their welfare as important only insofar as they are effective cogs in a machine, is the almost total lack of concern for veterans.

The political indoctrination of the troops, coupled with constant surveillance and severe sanctions of punishment, is relied on to bolster patriotism and stir hatred as the basis of morale. General Eisenhower’s observation was quite correct when he stated:

As far as I could see, Zhukov had given little concern to methods that we considered vitally important to the maintenance of morale among American troops: systematic rotation of units, facilities for recreation, short leaves and furloughs, and, above all, the development of techniques to avoid exposure of men to unnecessary battlefield risks, all of which, although common practices in our army, seemed to be largely unknown in his.^{[41](#)}

During the war, furloughs and leave were almost nonexistent in the Soviet Army. Since the war, only the lucky soldiers get a furlough during their 2 or 3 years' service. Even local passes are rare. This is a policy of the Soviet leadership which contrasts with American doctrine that "Furloughs and passes must be granted impartially and as freely as the situation permits."⁴²

The service conditions of the Soviet Army are quite harsh by Western standards; but so accustomed is the Soviet citizen to even worse conditions in civilian life, that these tend to be taken for granted. Both the low standard of living and the high degree of discipline and political controls are familiar to the Soviet soldier from civilian regimentation. We shall not discuss them in detail here, but merely note the much less prominent place among morale-determining factors accorded to service conditions in Soviet doctrine and practice. (There are indications that at least in the occupation army in Germany, this disregard for conditions of service has had a deleterious effect on morale.)⁴³

In coping with the emotional needs and strains of the Soviet soldier, the Soviet leadership relies primarily on indoctrination. The average Soviet soldier is less well educated and sensitized than his Western counterpart and probably suffers less from mental conflict and "nerves." The Soviets pay little attention to such emotional problems. However, the most important emotional strain of combat—fear—cannot be ignored. The usual modern approach is to recognize and face fear. Thus, the U.S. *Army Regulations* state:

The successful leader will teach his men to recognize and face fear, because fear is the enemy of discipline and morale. Fear unchecked will lead to panic, and a unit that panics is no longer a disciplined unit but a mob. There is no sane person who is altogether without fear, but with good discipline and high morale, all will face danger, if not willingly, at least stoically, because of their ingrained sentiments of duty, of courage, and of loyalty, and because of their sense of pride in their country, in their unit, and in themselves; in other words, because of their *esprit de corps*.⁴⁴

Soviet writing usually demonstrates a similar approach, at least in combat situations (where it matters). In Soviet accounts of the war, the heroes frequently admit fear, which they then overcome by their devotion to cause and country.⁴⁵ This was another point concerning morale stressed in the 1920's by former Imperial officers. Verkhovsky wrote in 1921: "Our task, as military men, is particularly difficult because we are building an organization of exceptional durability, an organization which must be capable of

withstanding and overcoming the most terrible disorganizing factor—the feeling of self-preservation, the fear of death.”⁴⁶ Soviet technical military writing, such as the *Outline of Psychology for Flyers*, continues to recognize fear and aims to overcome it by will.⁴⁷ The political line is indicated by the postwar work entitled *The Morale Factor in Contemporary War*, by Professor Leonov, of the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences. In this work he states that “ignorance of fear in fighting” is a basic component of the “morale spirit” of Soviet fighters.⁴⁸ This is not expected to mean any attempt to alter their sound attitude in practice that fear is something to be recognized, faced, and overcome. Indoctrination stresses valor and endurance—for the political aim—to overcome fear.

Fear is fundamentally the same in all human beings and basically is tied to the instinct of self-preservation. Difference in intensity and expression, however, characterizes different cultures and societies. The fear experienced by the typical Soviet soldier is apparently more diffuse and less linked with direct anxiety over possible loss of life owing to enemy action than is the case in Western armies. Supplementing the soldier’s normal fear, the Soviet system also introduces a general fear of his own officers and especially of the secret police officers, who popularly bore the name *Smersh* (a portmanteau word meaning “Death to Spies”). The feeling of perpetual submission to the omnipresent eyes of the regime is very strong and largely justified. In addition there is the fear of public disgrace and shame which even a faint sign of cowardice or treachery would bring.

In combat, several situations seem to cause particular fear in the Soviet Army. In all cases, they are reflected by Soviet tactical emphasis on the same factors, probably in the belief that they would be of the same special importance to the enemy. Flanking and encirclement, attack from the rear and by guerrilla harassment, and sniping are important examples. There is also particular fear of separation of men from their commanders and of adjoining units from one another. (All these “most feared” situations involve isolation.) Soviet doctrine takes account of these factors tactically, but not as morale matters.

Morale, in Soviet doctrine, is considered to be more *political* than *personal*. Thus, the means to affect morale differ from those most prominent in the West, as the illustrations above have shown. Service conditions are not considered to be of great importance, while political education (indoctrination) is given the chief place in morale determination.

Accordingly, the morale-building-and-maintaining function is assigned to the political administration within the armed forces.

Indoctrination

The function of indoctrination and morale maintenance and supervision is vested in the officers of the Chief Political Administration of the Army and of its counterpart in the Navy. This administration, although in the Ministries of War and of the Navy, reports directly to the Central Committee of the Party.⁴⁹

Since late 1942, the political officer has been known as the *zam-polit*, or Deputy Commander for Political Affairs [*Z amis tit el' po Politicheskoi Chasti*]. This has been a significant improvement over earlier periods in which the political “commissar” was the equal of the commander; for although he still wields great power and reports through his own separate channels, the *zampolit* is definitely subordinate to the commander,⁵⁰ which has done much to allay the previous antagonism between the commander and commissar. There is a *zampolit* down to the regimental level, with an assistant [*pompolit*] at the battalion and company levels and staffs at regimental and higher levels. Both soldiers and officers are given indoctrination in political study classes at which attendance is compulsory. Rank and file soldiers are given lectures, e.g., on the evil intentions of Western warmongers, and are required to study Stalin’s *Short Course* history of the Party; officers may be given more advanced materials, such as Lenin’s *Collected Works*.

Political officers are a combination of deputy commander, chaplain, special-services (recreation) officer, welfare officer, personnel officer, censor, and local newspaper editor. Their duties encompass political indoctrination through the study classes; supervision of all “recreation,” including leaves; censorship and control of unit newspapers (in the same way that at the top level *Red Star* and *Red Fleet* are published by the Chief Political Administration); and, in addition, liaison with the counterintelligence officers. All cases of poor morale or breaches of political discipline, except the most flagrant anti-Soviet outbursts, are handled by the *zampolit*, who acts as morale guide to the men and attempts to settle grievances and prevent dissatisfactions from growing or making

themselves manifest. This includes handling cases of violation of the fraternization ban in Germany and of similar less stringent prohibitions in the Soviet Union. In cases in which anti-Soviet statements or attitudes seem to require more than temporary local punishment, the case is turned over to the MGB counterintelligence officer. The *zampolit* sends periodic confidential reports through the Political Administration on the state of morale of the unit and of its officers. These reports are the leadership's barometer of military morale.

The (then) Chief of the Political Administration, Col. General Shikin, explained their purposes (in 1948) as being twofold: to assist in the psychological process of stimulating each man to achieve maximum efficiency in his military duties; and to make him an enthusiastic supporter of the Party and its policies.⁵¹ The *zampolit's* are viewed as "militant Bolsheviks, placed by the Bolshevik Party in a most important area of work."⁵² The wartime record of the *kom-issar* and later that of the *zampolit* is available only in widely discrepant accounts. German reports describe them either as fanatics who inspired and drove the men or as cowards who were hated and feared by line officers and men alike. In fact, they fitted these extremes and various points between, depending on personal qualities in each case. It would be a mistake to assume that they were always hated, feared, and despised—although this was generally true. In some cases they lived up to their ideal of inspirer and leader.

The wartime stress on patriotism and relative easing of the usual constraints on ordinary private expression of feelings did much to render palatable to the men the political officers' duties. The 1942 resumption of a deputy position by these officers went far to ease antagonisms between them and line officers.

Former Soviet soldiers and officers now in the West have described the boredom of the men with their political study classes and the not infrequent use of these occasions for sleep and relaxation. Sometimes leading questions embarrassing to the regime were innocently phrased; although these occasionally led to stern action on the part of the counterintelligence. It would not be correct, however, to consider the political officer as being an entirely negative morale institution. The functions of morale maintenance are very real, and even despite the general apolitical, non-Communist attitude of most Soviet citizens and soldiers, and despite many very unpopular commissars, the institution retains something of a positive role.

The second indoctrinating agency is the Party and its adjunct the Komsomol (Young Communist League). These organizations have “cells” in the ranks and among the officers, although generally not relatively large cells among the enlisted men. These cells, and, in larger bodies, committees, are used to further the political-indoctrination classes of the *zampolit* and to stir the Party members to approximate more closely the ideal of active and inspiring examples of self-denial for the Party (Cause). They also recruit new members (the opportunity for joining the Party, and especially the Komsomol, was made much easier during the war). In addition to the genuine members by conviction in the Party-Cause, many joined during the war merely because of constant pressure (especially the “heroes,” who were strongly urged to join) or for career advancement. Membership in the Party is a virtual necessity for promotion to any rank above company grade. Advantages are counterbalanced by the need to be an especially good example and the expectation that higher standards in general are held (with more harsh sanctions for any breach of discipline as a concomitant).

Surveillance

So far, we have discussed the two indoctrinating agencies, the Chief Political Administration and the unit Party organizations. Often confused with these, especially with the former, is the dreaded counterintelligence *Smersh* (“Death to Spies!”) organization, which has the task of surveillance and ultimately of punishment for all serious matters. This confusion is justified by the large auxiliary role of political surveillance enacted by the political officers as a major part of their duty as barometers of morale and as ideological chaplains. Surveillance and arrest of anyone suspected of anti-regime views is the duty of the counterintelligence officer.

The term “counterintelligence officer” is misleading to the Western reader, since counterintelligence in the Soviet conception is directed more against the personnel of the Soviet armed forces than against the enemy. Also, its officers are not regular army officers, but political police in military uniform. Before discussing its missions, we shall review briefly its organizational relation to the secret political police and armed forces.

The Soviet political police organization has borne a number of titles. From 1918 to 1922, it was called the *Cheka* ("Extraordinary Commission for the Suppression of Counterrevolution, Sabotage, and Speculation"). From 1922 to 1923, it was known as the GPU (State Police Administration); from 1923 to 1934, as the OGPU (United State Police Administration); from 1934 to 1943, as the NKVD (Peoples' Commissariat for Internal Affairs); and from 1943 to 1946, as the two commissariats NKVD and NKGB, renamed, since March, 1946, the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) and MGB (Ministry of State Security). Prior to April, 1943, there was in the NKVD a Chief Administration for State Security (GUGB), a Special Section [*OO.Osobyi Otdel*], and an Administration for Counter-intelligence (KRU). At this time the GUGB was separated from the NKVD, and the former *Osobyi Otdel* was merged with the KRU in a new Chief Administration for Counterintelligence (GUKR), which was subordinated to the GUGB. In May, 1943, this was renamed the NKGB, or Peoples' Commissariat for State Security. The *Osobyi Otdel*, and, after April, 1943, the GUKR, operated within the armed forces as the armed forces counterintelligence. Although technically subordinated to the Commissariat of Defense (NKO), they remained in fact organs of the secret political police (NKVD and later NKGB). The GUKR was also called *Smersh*, or "Death to Spies." Its officers wore regular army uniforms and appeared as army officers, probably as a concession to the regular officer corps in wartime. In the autumn of 1946, the GUKR was transferred from the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MVS) to the MGB, formalizing the *de facto* situation. MGB officers continue to wear regular uniforms of the services while attached to the army as counterintelligence officers.

The MGB officers are found throughout regimental (possibly battalion) levels, with staffs at the division and higher echelons. Their chain of command is independent of the line officer's channel, of the Chief Political Administration, and ultimately of the Ministry of War. There is a network of informers at all levels who are not MGB personnel, but who are frequently "blackmailed" over minor infractions of rules into informing. They are usually recruited by the *zampolit*, who turns their names over to the MGB officer. Usually, the MGB officer keeps a dossier [*delo*] on all officers and such enlisted men as are brought to his attention; this includes a watch over all Party personnel and political officers. He is expected to supervise closely the political attitudes, especially those of officers, to keep a vigilant watch

for anti-Soviet statements and activities, and to take vigorous action when they are revealed. In addition to surveillance of Soviet forces, he is charged with the discovery of enemy agents and with the interrogation of prisoners of war and civilians liberated from what were formerly enemy-occupied areas. In line with transfers of certain other functions and forces from the MVD, the wartime *zagraditel' nye otriadi* (“rear covering detachments”) would doubtless be under MGB command in wartime, their dual purpose being to prevent enemy infiltration and Soviet desertion or retreat.

Thus the MGB is the agency of counterintelligence, which in the Soviet conception comprises:

- Detection of anti-Soviet attitudes;
- Surveillance of officers, political officers, and men;
- Discovery and liquidation of enemy intelligence penetrations;
- Security from enemy intelligence and of documents.

The MGB officer is privileged in pay and other ways so as to be above corruption. He is feared for his power, and not without reason. Only in unusual cases would an MGB officer need to fear reports made against him by a brave *zampolit* or line officer. It is he, and usually not the *zampolit*, who maintains a network of informers. The number of informers varies greatly, depending on the general morale level of the unit; if there are indications of poor morale (out-spoken criticism of the regime, loud complaints over food, high venereal-disease rate, or a desertion), great pressure is placed on the MGB officer (and the *zampolit*), and in turn the number of informers is greatly increased.

Thus, the Chief Political Administration, aided by the Party and Komsomol organizations, has the task of indoctrination and assists in surveillance, while, the MGB* is charged with political surveillance and liquidation of counterrevolutionary (anti-Soviet) tendencies and enemy penetrations.

* In March, 1953, following Stalin's death, the MGB was merged in the MVD, and Marshal Beria reassumed charge of this ministry.

Discipline, Punishment, and Reward

In the early years of the Red Army the form of discipline became an issue. The exponents of a new proletarian military art especially stressed that although discipline was necessary, it must be “voluntary.” As Frunze put it:

Discipline in the Red Army must base itself not on fear of such punishment ... but on the voluntary consciousness of the fulfillment by each of his service duty, and the command personnel must give the primary example of such discipline. How can such discipline be maintained? In the first place, by the conscious progressive part of the Red Army mass, its Communist core, its political commanders, and its whole command personnel...⁵³

This theory of special proletarian (now “Soviet”) discipline remains, but the practice has greatly changed, especially since 1940. Prior to that time, in declining intensity, there was less attention paid to formal discipline (saluting, officer privileges, etc.), but the failures of the Finnish campaign in 1939–1940 pointed to the need for stricter discipline.

High among the reforms instituted by Marshal Timoshenko in 1940 was Order No. 356, of October 12, on discipline, which gave the commanders almost unlimited powers to maintain discipline. The 1940 *Field Regulations* incorporated this, and stated: “The commander is obligated to use all measures of compulsion against cowards, up to the application of arms on the spot.”⁵⁴ This was interpreted to cover gross insubordination as well, so that execution on the spot was permitted (although rarely exercised). In 1941, new *Disciplinary Regulations of the Red Army* were issued on the basis of Timoshenko’s order, formalizing this new disciplinary code in terms more harsh than the Imperial regulations. The postwar (1946, 1948, and 1950) *Disciplinary Regulations* and *Internal Service Regulations* repeat this stringent code.⁵⁵

In the early years drill was not considered as being a necessary means of instilling discipline, at least not to the same degree as in other nations. Frunze stated:

In constructing training, the element of drill in the Red Army must give up the backward plan; in it the very concept of “drill” must be completely changed, concerning drilling in the old meaning of the word; that is, in the purely mechanical sense, incorporating severe measures, exercise training by this means cannot even be thought about. Mechanicalness for itself cannot be demanded at all; it is necessary to build everything on the achievement of these effects by means of the maximum development of the personal initiative and independence of each Red Army man.⁵⁶

There were few who disagreed, although some former Imperial officers cautiously urged the need for considering this matter more on its own merits. Egorev reminded them that it was necessary to teach the soldier more than merely what he would need in combat, and that while rote was not to be sought, close-order drill was still valuable in training.⁵⁷ In contrast, the contemporary stress on drill has adopted a parade goosestep. The formerly maligned prerevolutionary drill is now even proudly recalled as the basis of current drill. Colonel Khitrov, in a statement more extreme in its praise of the Imperial tradition than is usual, stated: “The Russian army at all times was distinguished by high discipline and lovely drill. That was one of the best traditions which the Soviet Army has inherited. It is no accident that even now we recognize the soldier remaining from the old army by his bearing, even though he is in civilian dress.”⁵⁸

The company is the basic unit for drill.⁵⁹

The Soviet *Infantry Drill Regulations* of 1947 and 1948 show general improvement over the prewar editions, but remain devoted almost exclusively to commands and positions on the individual, squad, and platoon levels and have nothing corresponding to the provision of the United States regulations for battalion and regimental drill parades.⁶⁰

We have noted before the harsh sanctions on Soviet commanders for failure. The rough equation of success with correct initiative in discipline and failure with improper initiative has also been seen. One example is given below, taken from the postwar memoirs of a heavy bomber pilot and setting forth the typical Soviet attitude with rare candor. After a crash landing in which some people were killed, a close friend told the flyer responsible:

We know that you could have thrown away the airplane and parachuted and you would have been formally correct. But you were firmly convinced of the possibility of a successful landing and decided to save the machine. *All that was fine if you had saved the machine.* But the machine was destroyed and people were killed—you must be punished. “Yes, friends,” said Vladimir [the guilty one]

The guilty flyer saw things in the same way; guilt was his, regardless of extenuating circumstances:

In court Vladimir *didn't make the slightest attempt to defend himself.* He said nothing of the bad work of the starting command, the leader who became lost and couldn't secure the landing of all his planes. The profession of a flyer had taught him always to hold his answer *to the essential*, not

referring to any kind of secondary reasons. “I did not do what was required of me as a pilot. In that is my guilt. Therefore I must bear my punishment. Say no more to me.”⁶¹

For this meritorious admission of guilt and readiness to accept punishment, and since it was an error of judgment rather than lack of faith (in the ideology, regime, or superiors), he was given a mild sentence; he was permitted to remain in the unit and was only reduced to being a co-pilot. In other similar cases the punishment was often more severe, but usually there was opportunity for redemption (e.g., in one case known to the author, an officer was reduced to the ranks and required to serve briefly in a “penal battalion”; he was then restored to rank).

This phenomenon of guilt [*vina*] as inseparable from responsibility or accountability [*otvetstvennos'*], which is found throughout Soviet law, is demonstrated by another incident recorded by Colonel Ushakov in his memoirs. In describing an accident due to a defective motor, he stated:

We, of course, understood that the mechanic was not responsible here, the whole matter of a defective motor didn't depend at all on him. But in aviation it is considered: if an airplane is landed badly—the cause is not important, the flyer is guilty since its direction is in his hands; if there is a loss of orientation in the air—the navigator is guilty. Exactly the same with the technicians. Prokofich [the mechanic] knew this very well.⁶²

Late in 1942, the institution of the “penal battalion” *Ishtrafnyi bated'iori* was created. These units (also in company size) were created out of men and officers undergoing military punishment and were used for the most dangerous tasks not requiring loyalty and initiative; e.g., for clearing minefields by advancing, for almost suicidal blows at the enemy defense, and as the initial echelon in areas of heavy enemy fire. As we have noted, their personnel was sometimes released for return to regular units (usually not their original ones) if they survived such an ordeal. The use of the NKVD (now MVD) to cover troops in their rear was, of course, necessary. In some cases, according to former Major General Markoff, they were sent into battle unarmed, as pure cannon fodder.⁶³

The usual methods of reward are promotion and decoration. Leave is rarely given. Promotion is determined largely by the personal record of the candidate; even in peacetime, seniority and age are not always the primary considerations. The Soviet leadership makes relatively free use of decorations for outstanding bravery and success. The Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union is the highest award for valor, corresponding to the

American Congressional Medal of Honor. During the Soviet-German war, 10,940 men were named Hero of the Soviet Union, including about 100 men who were twice awarded this decoration and 3 men who received it thrice—Marshal of the Soviet Union Zhukov and the two top air aces, Guards Colonels Alexander Pokryshkin and Ivan Kozhedub.⁶⁴* Stalin has been given the medal twice. (This is in contrast with the award of 269 Congressional Medals of Honor by the United States in the Second World War⁶⁵ and with the award of only 11 or 12 Crosses of Saint George, First Class, by the Imperial Russian Army in World War I.) In all, over 11,000,000 decorations were bestowed by the Soviets during the war.⁶⁶† (This contrasts with the award by the United States of 1,400,409 decorations, excluding the Purple Heart for wounds, in World War II.⁶⁷)

* By arms, the army air force had 2119 Heroes of the Soviet Union, including 63 twice Heroes and 2 thrice Heroes; the artillery, 1677 Heroes and 2 twice Heroes; the tank and mechanized forces, 1120 Heroes and 18 twice Heroes; the navy, 513 Heroes, including 7 twice Heroes; and the civil air fleet, 12 Heroes. No comparable data are available on other arms, including the infantry, all of which together account for the remaining 3478 Heroes. (These figures have been compiled from the Soviet military press; see footnote 64 of Chapter 14, p. 478.)

† Based on the same sources as those given for the distribution of the award of Hero of the Soviet Union, the following number of men, by arms, were decorated: air force, 200,000 men and officers; tank and mechanized, 250,000; artillery, 1,200,000; navy, 278,000; and civil air fleet, 15,000. These figures refer to the number of recipients, many of whom received more than one decoration; thus the navy had 352,855 decorations, although only 278,000 men were decorated. Figures for other arms are not available.

Soviet theory and propaganda ascribe a particularly high level of valor and outstanding service to the Party members. The figures given on the percentage of recipients of decorations who were Party affiliates support this contention. Two Soviet sources stated that 65 per cent of the Heroes of the Soviet Union were Party members, and that an additional 18 per cent were Komsomol members, totaling 83 per cent Party affiliates; a third source gave the figure for Komsomols at 27 per cent, with a total of 92 per cent.⁶⁸ One-half of all recipients of decorations are said to have been Party and Komsomol members.⁶⁹ The accuracy of these statistics cannot be determined; Soviet statistics are frequently misleading. It is not implausible, however, that these figures are substantially correct, although not necessarily, as the Soviets wish to imply, because of greater courage shown by Party members. It is known that strong pressure was placed upon officers and all who won decorations to join the Party; this may account for the very impressive figure

given above.⁷⁰ Of course, it is also likely that some preference was given to Party members in the bestowal of awards.

The Soviet soldier and officer often displayed an ambivalent attitude toward decorations. The Russians are generally alleged to evince a great pride in such awards, and the Soviet practice of designing medals for excelling in farm and factory work, in addition to the large numbers given for military exploits, seems to bear this out. According to former Soviet soldiers and officers, medals are often considered to be cheapened by their large numbers and by cases of undeserved “political” award, but these same former Soviet military men often show pride in their own decorations.

The Soviet attitude toward surrender strikingly exemplifies their conception of discipline. Surrender, under any circumstances, is absolutely forbidden. The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* stated in bold type that “*Nothing, including even the threat of death, can compel a fighter of the Red Army to become a prisoner.*”⁷¹ This was standard doctrine even before the war. One pamphlet published in 1940 was titled *The Fighter of the Red Army Does Not Become a Prisoner*.⁷² A Soviet officer taken in the Finnish war explained to an American correspondent who interviewed him that “capture meant surrender, and what right has one man to surrender while his comrades are being killed at his side?”⁷³ This explains the consistent Soviet refusals to exchange prisoners. General Eisenhower wrote about a conversation on prisoners he had with an unnamed Soviet general. It is very illuminating and is quoted here:

The basic differences between American and Russian attitudes in the handling of men were illustrated on another occasion. While talking to a Russian general I mentioned the difficult problem that was imposed upon us at various periods of the war by the need to care for so many German prisoners. I remarked that they were fed the same rations as were our own soldiers. In the greatest astonishment he asked, “why did you do that?” I said, “well, in the first place, my country was required to do so by the terms of the Geneva Convention. In the second place the Germans had some thousands of American and British prisoners and I did not want to give Hitler the excuse or justification for treating our prisoners more harshly than he was already doing.” Again the Russian seemed astounded at my attitude and he said, “But what did you care about men the Germans had captured? They had surrendered and could not fight anymore.”⁷⁴

The Soviet attitude was not to ignore these prisoners in the hands of the enemy; it could not be so “neutral,” since the Bolshevik view is that “All who are not for us are against us.” In an order in September, 1941, Stalin declared that all prisoners of war would be considered traitors to their

country.⁷⁵ General Haider noted in his diary, July 12, 1941, the capture of a field order signed by Marshal Timoshenko threatening to court-martial anyone even talking about retreat.⁷⁶ In at least two cases it was reported that the Soviets deliberately bombed prisoner-of-war camps each housing about 40,000 Russian prisoners (at Orel and Novogorod-Seversky); in one of these cases they also dropped leaflets stating: “So will it be with all those who betray the cause of Lenin and Stalin.”⁷⁷

In spite of this, over two million Soviet prisoners were taken in the initial four months of the war, and probably over four million were taken in the first year.⁷⁸ Smaller numbers continued to be taken throughout the war. The postwar Soviet treatment of the repatriated Soviet prisoners fully bore out their wartime attitude: they were treated indiscriminately as traitors and possible spies. The morale effect of this Soviet view is again ambivalent; although many hate, and fear, this attitude, those who do not surrender feel proud.

Discipline is the product and requisite of authority. Cases of gross breaches of discipline, particularly the mass breaches of discipline of the early months of the war, were due to the disintegration of the command channels. As former Major General Alexei Markoff, who was in a position to know, reported: “By the second day of the war, the Red Army was a hopeless mess.” He was informed by General Headquarters that they did not even know the disposition or state of most of their own troops.⁷⁹ We have noted General Petrov’s despair upon being appointed commander over two new armies (the Thirtieth and Thirty-third) which he could not even locate! Later in 1941 and in 1942 the Red Army was also retreating; but without the mass surrenders, primarily because of the re-establishment of channels of command and communication.

Authority means much more than merely channels of command and discipline; it includes leadership. Leadership in the Soviet armed forces, as we have seen in the previous chapter, may manifest itself in tendencies toward either of two poles of an authority “continuum.” One pole is Bureaucratic or impersonal authority, and the other is Paternal leadership authority. Both may be harsh, and usually are in the Soviet Army. Strictness per se is not hated, however, and the typical Soviet soldier probably respects stern authority; what is hated is impersonal, bureaucratic, legalistic authority. Paternal authority, which, although strict and demanding, is fair and

“personal,” is respected. This attitude of the Soviet soldier’s toward his commanders (particularly commanding generals) is given further credence by the apparent popularity of such men as Marshals Zhukov, Rokossovsky, and Konev, and the unpopularity of Marshal Timoshenko, who is considered a stiff martinet.

In general, Soviet doctrine on morale is successful, despite harsh service conditions and dissatisfaction. Only under special circumstances, such as the opportunity, in particular, to see allegiance to their native land through some agency other than the Soviet regime and army, or the fragmentation of Soviet authority, is it likely that morale would assume such a hostile posture as to destroy discipline to the Soviet leadership.

CHAPTER 15

PREDICTION, INTELLIGENCE,

AND RECONNAISSANCE

The fundamental fear which we have seen manifested in so many ways in Soviet military doctrine accentuates the usual high value placed on knowing what the enemy intends to do—when, how, and with what. Marxism-Leninism presumes to tell why and to give a more solid basis for foreseeing and predicting the enemy's plans. It is this aspect of the problem which we shall examine first.

Prediction and Chance

Marxism-Leninism, as the only true science, is considered to be the basis for foresight [*Ipredvidenie*]. As Major General Pukhovsky wrote, “Genuine science [Marxian-Leninism], knowing not only how to see but also to foresee, permits humanity to utilize practically the scientific laws discovered...”¹ This is seen, even in war, as primarily a political matter. As Colonel Chuvikov wrote: “The ability to foresee the course of unfolding events in social life in general, and *in war in particular, depends upon the art of the political leadership.*”² In practice this theoretical point is of little importance so long as the top military leadership is fused (in Stalin) with the top political leadership.

The Party, and Stalin as its leader, is thus endowed with this foresight. Not only are the Party and Stalin thus able to determine what must be done, but

they must organize the accomplishment of the planned “line.” Professor Leonov stated this clearly:

The strength of the Party of Bolsheviks is not only in its ability to determine the aims of the movement and work out the correct, scientific line, but also in its ability to organize the masses in the struggle for the realization of these aims, its ability to embody in life scientific foresight.³

The claims of Marxism—that history moves in an inevitable course, and that Marxism permits the most scientific prediction of this historical path of the dialectic—present a special challenge to the Soviet leadership (and to Soviet writers who stress the great predictive ability of the Soviet leadership). Foresight and prediction are highly placed Bolshevik virtues. Leonov wrote:

The strength of Stalinist leadership is in foreseeing the course of events, which permits “understanding the meanings of them in accordance with the general tendency of development” (Stalin, *On the Opposition*, p. 75). Stalin, like no one else, is able to uncover deeply the internal connections between events, and to illuminate each new historic step forward with foresight of genius.⁴

Not only is Stalin credited with this genius of foresight, but, according to Major General Fomichenko, “The ability to foresee is the strongest sign of Stalin’s genius.”⁵ Stalin’s foresight is said to make possible the assignment of clearer future tasks. Major General Kovalevsky wrote that “Comrade Stalin not only explained events, he even foresaw their future courses of development. Proceeding from his genius foresight he set concrete tasks before the Soviet people and its armed forces.”⁶ And in addition to this “organizing” function, his foresight also is said to “inspire” the Soviet people and soldiers. As Professor Leonov wrote: “Stalinist foresight always gave and gives assurance and the will to victory to the masses of Soviet people, arms them with clarity, perspective and orientation in events, undeviating determination to advance forward.”⁷ Leonov also stated: “The entire course of the Fatherland War serves as a clear affirmation of the truth of the Stalinist prognoses.”⁸ In Major General Isayev’s words, “Stalin’s strategic foresight and penetration, his ability promptly to divine and foil the enemy’s designs by countering them with his own broad and bold design, were brought out with exceptional force in the Great Patriotic War.”⁹ Specific battles are also occasionally credited to Stalin’s foresight; for

example, it is said that “The entire profundity of Stalin’s foresight was strikingly manifested during the battle of Stalingrad.”¹⁰

Prediction plays an important role in the Bolshevik political code¹¹ and is similarly treated in military matters. In Soviet terminology, prediction is based on “the calculation of the relation of forces” existing and anticipated (on the basis of all intelligence) to prevail. This is, of course, not totally unique; for instance, the U.S. *Field Service Regulations* state that “The capabilities of the opposing forces and the possible effect of their employment must be continually evaluated,” and, of course, that one’s own capabilities must also be considered.¹² There appears, however, to be a significant difference in reliance on “foresight” derived from such estimates of the situation. The U.S. *Regulations* continue: “The commander must guard against the belief that he has discovered the enemy’s intentions and consequently ignoring other lines of action open to the enemy.”¹³ The Soviet view differs in its emphasis. As Major General Miasnikov expressed this attitude, “It is now not enough to be an operator, it is necessary to be ... able to foresee the development of events. That is one of the characteristics of the contemporary art of leading troops ...” and further, “The necessity of mobile command demands of the commander ... foresight of the development of the operation and battle....”¹⁴ This is seen chiefly in connection with planning operations and in executing them. Lt. General Zlobin pointed out that

An offensive operation consists of a series of phases.... Their outlines are planned beforehand along with the preparation of an operation on the basis of the general design, but they may change in the course of an operation according to the situation and the countermeasures taken by the enemy. For this reason, *it is imperative*, within the limits of each phase, *to foresee and clarify* the condition of the transition of consecutive phases....

In order to shorten the operational foci between successive operations, the front commander should *foresee* the course of events and take advanced steps to prepare the ensuing operations.¹⁵

In practical operations this stress on “foresight” means merely that planning must be based on a close “estimate of the situation.” Thus the manual *General Tactics* stated:

The organization of combat operations is not only based on intelligence prior to the operation, but also on *foresight* in predicting the course of developments during the battle. This foresight, in turn, must be established on an analysis of the capabilities of our own forces and probable enemy countermeasures. On the basis of this evaluation of the situation, the commander must determine,

even though in general terms, the areas in which maximum and minimum enemy resistance will probably be found....¹⁶

Bolshevik military doctrine does not rely totally on “foresight,” even when based fully on information and complete analysis. The counterpoint of vigilance to meet the unpredictability of chance [*sluchainost*] and the dangers of provocation [*provokatsiia*] is as pervasive as the stress on foresight and prediction.

Chance, the intervention of the uncontrolled and the uncontrollable, has plagued strategists throughout history. Napoleon once defined security as the mathematical elimination of chance. The Soviets similarly find it an impediment to strategic planning, but to a much greater degree.

Chance, in the Bolshevik view, is a positive danger. The impossibility either of rationally calculating and planning its effects or of manipulating its influence causes chance to be particularly feared. In the Soviet view, the decisive “relation of forces” between the enemy and themselves must be calculated, but it is also subject to certain manipulation—both means of eliminating chance.¹⁷ The Soviets thus tend to claim to be able almost to eliminate chance. For example, Major General Galatinov, in discussing the importance of the determination of the direction of the main blow, asserted that in the absence of this rational planning “the conduct of war is given up to the arbitrariness of the elements and chance.”¹⁸ Chance is thus the “threat” if one fails to perform the proper rational action. In their fear of any uncontrollable fate and their rejection of it as a normal course of events, the Soviets tend to deny that any action (by them) is “by chance” [*sluchaino*], as this would imply a failure to plan and act in the way that they claim to do. To cite one interesting example, Dzerzhinsky (head of the *Cheka*, political police, in the period from 1917 to 1922) was once asked why a daughter had been arrested “by chance.” He replied: “Your daughter lost a package by chance, but the Red Army man *not by chance* understood her, and *not by chance* arrested her. Vigilance of the rank and file Red Army man is *not an accident*. Precisely in that is the strength of the *Cheka*.”¹⁹

Chance cannot occupy a normal role in any theory such as Marxism-Leninism, which presumes to predict (at least over the long range) the course of history. The strong Soviet stress on operational “foresight” and “prediction,” which we reviewed above, similarly denies the existence of chance occurrences except as the consequence of occasional failures to

“foresee.”* Thus, foresight and vigilance to guard against chance are both demanded.

* Clausewitz is criticized for admitting chance, luck, and risk in war. (See the discussion by Colonel Baz', in *Istochniki Voennogo Mogushchestva Sovetskogo Soiuza*, pp. 10-11.)

In addition to the danger from chance, even more feared is the danger from provocation. Unless the “objective” situation is carefully calculated and definite “plans” formulated and carried out “to the very end,” there is great danger that the enemy will subtly provoke one into unwittingly following a course of action favoring his side of the equation of the “relation of forces.” As a corollary, loss of initiative or inadequate vigor in using initiative is considered to permit the enemy to “call the tune” and reduce one to the “dependent” position of merely countering moves selected by him.

In the early post-Revolutionary years, there was more frankness in military circles in admitting failures to use adequate foresight. One writer even admitted, concerning the Red campaign against General Wrangel, that “A special characteristic here is that these battles by no means entered into the considerations and plans of the Red Army, for they were not even foreseen by the command.”²⁰ Another writer mentioned as a major shortcoming of the Civil War “the constant insufficiency of information about the opponent.”²¹ Tukhachevsky even saw a great decline in predictability and foresight in future wars because of their expected class (civil war) character. He said: “It is completely understandable that no one can foresee where an uprising will come, what the relation of forces and means between the two future foes will be.”²² Even in 1935 an important study on strategic deployment dearly expressed unpredictability and the need for flexibility in planning. It stated:

The plan of strategic deployment of the army, that is, study of the areas of departure for the offensive, even though it be worked out before the war, must still have the maximum perspicacity, all-sidedness, and flexibility, because in peace time long preceding war all details cannot be perceived. Already in the beginning stages of the war, actuality brings forth a whole series of corrections, and therefore the plan must be expedient, and swiftly adaptable *in the course of events* to reconsider many questions. The experience of the past ten years shows that not one plan of strategic deployment of an army was wholly and fully realized and carried out in the first stage of the war, as was anticipated by the general staff in peacetime.²³

“Stalinist” military writing, while stressing “vigilance,” never admits failures in foresight, but rather tends to glorify the predictive endowment of the *vozhd'*, Stalin.

Intelligence and Espionage

Razvedka, the Soviet word for intelligence, is very broad in meaning, comprising what we understand by all the meanings of intelligence as process and institution (not as result, however) and also as reconnaissance.

Intelligence has come to occupy an extraordinarily significant place in Soviet thought and doctrine. For example, in his speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party on March 3, 1937, Stalin reminded his audience:

In order to win an engagement in time of war, it is necessary to have several corps of Red Army men. But in order to pluck this victory on the front, several spies somewhere on the army staff, or even divisional staff, capable of stealing the operational plan and giving it to the opponent, is all that is necessary. In order to construct a great railroad bridge, thousands of men are needed, but in order to blow it up, several people are sufficient. Tens and hundreds of such examples could be given.^{[24](#)}

In the purge trials of 1936-1938, great stress was placed on the alleged intelligence activities of the defendants. Following these purges, Stalin declared to the Eighteenth Party Congress (and the world) in 1939 that “our intelligence service ... is no longer turned to the inside of the country, but to the outside, against external enemies.”^{[25](#)} The constantly reiterated theme of vigilance against foreign intelligence has been supplemented by the trials of Rajk, Kostov, Slansky, and other former Communist leaders in eastern Europe, and of Vogeler, Oatis, and other foreigners; but no case of penetration of the USSR had been publicly admitted since the trials of the “Old Bolsheviks” in the 1930’s until the new purge began in January, 1953.

British intelligence has traditionally been regarded by the Soviets as the most dangerous system. Stalin made an interesting toast at a meeting with Churchill in August, 1943, to “The Intelligence Service.”^{[26](#)} Since the rise of the United States in world political dominance following the Second World War, most references have been to alleged American spies and agents.

Soviet espionage has a long history, commencing with the expulsion of Joffe, the first Soviet ambassador, from Germany in 1918 for flagrant abuse of his diplomatic privileges by giving aid to the German Communists (Spartakists) and by making use of his privileges for intelligence purposes.^{[27](#)}

In the early 1920’s Soviet foreign intelligence assumed its basic pattern. In most cases the ambassador is not connected with any network, although

members of his staff often are. Several parallel networks exist, often ignorant of one another's existence. Prior to the war, there were separate Comintern, secret police (INO), army (*Razvedupr*), and navy networks. Since the war there have been separate MGB-MVD and military networks. (Air force intelligence collection has always been a function of army intelligence.) A number of revelations by former Soviet espionage agents at various levels and locations have indicated the general pattern of operation of these networks in some detail.²⁸ Of these, the Guzenko-Royal Commission reports and the Foote account concern military intelligence networks during and since the war and indicate that they closely approximate the other Soviet espionage systems. While this is beyond the scope of the present study, the great attention paid to developing intelligence (and countering alleged enemy attempts at intelligence penetration) is of considerable importance in Soviet military doctrine.

Despite the attention paid to intelligence and its great successes, there is apparently considerable suspicion regarding the use of such information. This reluctance is shown very clearly in Foote's account; a source on the German General Staff is reported to have begun shortly before the outbreak of hostilities to supply complete information on German troop dispositions and plans and to have continued to do so at least until late 1944. The first information from this source told in advance the exact plans and timing for the invasion of the USSR.²⁹ The same vital information was acquired a full month in advance by an old and trusted agent, Sorge, who had the confidence of the German Embassy in Tokyo.³⁰ Yet despite these advance warnings, the Soviet armed forces were surprised by the German attack. While the suspicion of the "center" (Moscow headquarters) is quite understandable, obvious failure to be fully prepared in the eventuality of the correctness of these reports is very peculiar. Not for several months was the German staff source finally trusted, and following the sole error in its information (concerning the Kharkov operation in 1942), all information from this source, although demonstrably correct, was again disregarded for a long time as being a "plant." As "the Director" in Moscow told Foote when he was at "the center" after the war,

After we received this and saw all the damage that it wrought we could only assume that Lucy [code name for the source's channel or "cut-out"] was a double agent and all his information was false and supplied by the Abwehr [German secret service]. For a long time after that we ignored the information, convinced that it was planted on us. Only after months of checking did we decide that,

as all the other information from that source was correct and could be proved correct, the source was after all reliable.³¹

So great is the Soviet fear of “provocation” that they failed to use adequately this vital information. Excessive internal security measures also reduce the efficiency of Soviet intelligence collation, evaluation, and dissemination. One former Soviet officer even declared that, for this reason, “even in the purely military sphere, Soviet intelligence is poor, often contradictory, and sometimes even assumes an absurd character.”³²

Military intelligence in Moscow is part of the Chief Intelligence Administration (GRU), or Intelligence Division, of the General Staff. There is no military counterintelligence organization abroad or in the army, this being exclusively an MYD function.³³

Concerning operational military intelligence, Soviet doctrine requires that *“Intelligence will be conducted permanently and ceaselessly,”* and that *“No one form of intelligence can completely replace another,”*³⁴ The importance accorded to intelligence in Soviet military doctrine is overstated almost to caricature in a curious statement by Colonel Lavrov that “Battle is for intelligence, and not intelligence for battle.”³⁵

A high German military source, writing in the West after the war, paid Soviet intelligence the compliment of declaring: “The Russian Intelligence service covered events in the German Army with amazing speed and accuracy.”³⁶

Major General Korkodinov has described the general aims of operational military intelligence as follows:

Intelligence is organized in order to uncover this or that advantage of the enemy, this or that maneuver from the very inception of its realization. It is necessary not only to know exactly the disposition and actions of the enemy at the front, considerably more broad than the sector or zone of actions of a given operation formation, but also in the depth of his disposition to the most distant reserves, not only closely fixing and studying the smallest changes in the grouping of the enemy and any kind of advantage he has, but also to be able on the basis of this to penetrate the plan of the foe, to uncover his design. In the course of operations it is especially important to keep an eye on the reserves of the enemy and on the likely paths of their entrance to the region of operations.³⁷

The essential role of intelligence in relation to foresight and planning is expressed by two other Soviet officers, who wrote: “In planning an operation, commanders and their staffs must cover every detail of the forthcoming engagement and foresee [r/f] every minor factor that could

influence the outcome of the battle one way or the other. Their efforts were directed *first of all* to uninterrupted intelligence reports.”³⁸

Reconnaissance and Combat Intelligence

Razvedka is divided into the usual Soviet categories of “strategic” intelligence, discussed briefly in the previous section, “operational” intelligence, and “tactical” intelligence (including reconnaissance).

Great stress is laid on the need for unceasing intelligence on all these levels. One “popularized” manual urged Soviet airmen to “Conduct reconnaissance constantly—before battle and during battle, on the march and at rest. Intelligence is the eyes and ears of the commander. Without intelligence, not one step.”³⁹ And as Major General Ishchenko wrote, “Reconnaissance must be carried on constantly day and night, in any time of the year, with complete intensity and with the utilization of all potentialities of the troops ... if conditions sometimes even dictated a pause between battles, in reconnaissance there were none.”⁴⁰ Combat intelligence and reconnaissance, by all arms, is vigorously pressed in doctrine and in practice.

The 1936 *Field Regulations* introduced the requirement of absolute responsibility (i.e., no officer could claim responsibility of a superior as excuse for failures or omissions) into combat intelligence and reconnaissance. Thus, it is required that “Independent of the sending of reconnaissance units by the higher command, each commander... sends his own reconnaissance.”⁴¹

The aims of reconnaissance are in general the same as in the West. One manual stresses three aims: clarification of the situation of (1) the enemy, (2) the terrain, and (3) the attitudes of the local population.⁴² This latter objective is relatively more emphasized than in the West.

Reconnaissance in force is frequently employed, usually by at least one reinforced battalion per division, about two days preceding the attack. In 1944, before the offensive of the First Ukrainian Front, fifty reconnaissances in force were carried out between May 1 and July 12, as well as three hundred lesser raids, and detailed sketches were furnished to all units.⁴³

Partisans were used for intelligence, and during the Jassy-Kishinev operation, for example, a number of higher German and Rumanian headquarters were located so exactly that they were effectively neutralized on the first day of the operation.^{[44](#)}

The Soviets use prisoners of war extensively to obtain information, as do other armies. Patrols are often charged with capturing prisoners, called “tongues,” for intelligence purposes. As one Soviet military order stated, “The best authentic information about the enemy can be obtained from prisoners.”^{[45](#)}

CHAPTER 16

DECEPTION, SURPRISE, AND SECURITY

The Soviets make extensive and effective use of various forms of deception and surprise and exercise strong measures to frustrate enemy efforts at reciprocation.

Deception and Camouflage

Available evidence demonstrates considerable Soviet interest and accomplishment in the field of deception. This is characteristic of Soviet political affairs as well as of military operations. As Lenin once remarked, “No government says everything that it thinks.”¹

Deception, as Speier has pointed out, may be of the senses (material camouflage) and of the mind (psychological warfare, morale, and intelligence). Political deception may be easier because intent, rather than physical capability, is concerned.² In both cases, simulation and dissimulation are the two general means of deception. Deception may be aimed at the enemy or, as is less frequent, at one's own people. The ultimate aim in deceiving the enemy is to surprise him; the intermediate aim is usually the security of intentions and of the means which are to cause surprise. Deceiving one's own people may have the aim of deceiving the enemy, but may also aim at creating a higher level of morale. (In a situation in which the enemy does not know the extent of some unfavorable phenomenon, the first of these reasons will probably be paramount, although the latter will be

admixed, as after Pearl Harbor in 1941. When the extent of loss and danger is fully known to the enemy, one's own people may remain uninformed or be misinformed for the purpose of avoiding ill effects on morale.)

Deception may be both “active” (misleading and misinforming the enemy) and “passive” (concealing one's real intentions and disposition). Soviet military doctrine stresses the need for intensive use of both. The basic Soviet work *Camouflage* stated:

Deception of the enemy is achieved by means of *concealment* from his observation of existing objects, *and by the creation of simulated objects*, distracting the attention of his intelligence and forces *in the direction desired by us*.³

Many similar statements of this Soviet determination not only to mislead the enemy, but to do so in such a way that he will unwittingly serve Soviet ends, could be cited. As Major General Subbotin, and others, wrote: “... the art of directing troops does not achieve its aim if *the main element* is lacking—*concealment* of all its measures *and deflection of the enemy onto a deceptive path favorable to us*.”⁴ This is, of course, a very old principle: *Simulantur quae non sunt, quae sunt vero dissimulantur*.^{*} Soviet awareness of this principle and determination to make it active and effective is highly pronounced.

^{*} “To simulate that which is not, to dissimulate that which exists.”

Deception must follow a definite arrangement integrated into the general plan: “Each time, depending upon the circumstances, a whole series of such [deceptive] maneuvers can be taken; the army staff must consider them, but *in all cases they must be conducted by a definite, clear, purposeful plan* only then can one count on success.”⁵

The *Wehrmacht* official *Leaflet on the Peculiarities of Russian Methods of Combat* issued on June 21, 1941, declared:

In all methods of fighting, use is made of *dummy installations*, and *deceptive fire* of all weapons ... *make-believe tank trouble* in order to be able to fire on the approaching enemy at very close range.... Particular importance is also attached to the employment of *ruses in reconnaissance*, for *attracting fire* [to force disclosure of gun positions] by the use of *dummy figures*, for example, or the *remote manipulation of noise-producing apparatus*....⁶

This pamphlet commented that Soviet “inventive genius in such matters is very great.” Despite a realization of the importance attached to deception by

the Soviets and of their ability in this field, the Germans were not able fully to counteract Soviet efforts.

One form of deception used was that of multiple blows on a wide front to prevent the Germans from knowing where the main attack was being launched. Similarly, the 1936 *Field Regulations* required that “Reconnaissance of all types must be conducted on a wide front, in order to conceal the direction of the main blow.”⁷ German reports attest the general efficacy of this, although sometimes the especially intensive use of reconnaissance in force disclosed the location of the planned Soviet attack.

Feints were successfully used, although much more frequent was the use of deceptive troop movements prior to the attack.⁸ Thus, troops were often moved from the rear in one direction and under cover of night were marched to an entirely different sector. Preparation behind one sector of the front and last-minute transfer of troops to another sector often misled the enemy with regard to the direction of an impending attack by other forces. A secret German report on *Indications of Soviet Russian Breakthrough Attacks* in 1944 declared that

The forming of a clear picture of the enemy is often substantially disturbed, distorted and delayed by the following influences:

(a) *Camouflage*: Besides masterly camouflage during collecting, decisive movements are for the most part carried out at night, and the formations to be used are never assembled immediately behind the breakthrough sector, but frequently behind sectors that are earmarked for use later in secondary or dummy attack. The use of written “operation orders” is forbidden prior to the attack.... Tanks are collected in forests, always, however, dug in and superbly camouflaged....

(b) *Deception*: The preparations for every attack include a “Deception Plan” which is worked out by headquarters staff. On principle, gun positions are built on several sectors of the front in preparation for the concentration of the attack and occupied by dummies whose subsequent replacement by the attacking arms cannot often be identified. Departures of troops are disguised by advance spreading of false rumors.⁹

The widespread use of faked concentrations of weapons, of sham installations and positions, and of dummy equipment and weapons (which were sometimes replaced later or exchanged for real ones) caused great difficulty to German reconnaissance.

In the preparations in the Kursk salient, where the Soviets had precise knowledge of the time and place of the German attack, especially extensive use was made of deception. According to Major General Fomichenko,

When, in the summer of 1943, the Soviet troops were preparing to repulse the enemy's attacks on Kursk, they camouflaged their positions in a masterly way. German scout planes flying at a height of only a few score meters could see nothing but bare fields. Yet in these seemingly deserted fields entire Soviet regiments, with their artillery, mortars, and tanks, were concealed. A German document which fell into the hands of the Soviet troops stated: "Divebombers flew over the hill and reported that they observed nothing. As a matter of fact there was an augmented regiment entrenched there, although it could not be detected from a distance of five meters. Before the offensive we did not believe there was a quarter of what the Russians actually had there."

When they started their offensive at Kursk, the Germans did not know the location of the Soviet defences. The Soviet commanders deceived the enemy not only by skillfully camouflaging their actual defenceworks, but by erecting a host of sham ones—1,500 false trenches, battery positions and observation posts, some 900 moveable dummy tanks and 200 dummy aircraft. In addition three sham concentration areas for large armoured forces and thirteen sham airfields were laid out. The Germans were fooled. They put in a lot of work to make their offensive a success, but all in vain. In many cases the enemy's artillery and aircraft wasted their shells and bombs on defence works which were nothing but dummies.¹⁰

The Soviet Army sometimes constructed as many as 5000 dummy tanks and 2000 fake aircraft to deceive the enemy.¹¹ Especially great attention is devoted to camouflage of airfields and air bases, including the construction of fake airfields complete with dummy aircraft, hangars, and runways. In some cases in the Zone of the Interior, genuine airfields too well known to the enemy were even deserted and maintained as dummies to draw hostile attacks to them.

Trial and diversionary fire was used to mislead the enemy as to the sector of an impending attack, and also to draw premature hostile counterfire and force disclosure of enemy gun positions. Barrages would sometimes suddenly lift as if for the assault and, when the remaining enemy batteries opened fire, resume fire with the aim of destroying them. Also, barrages would sometimes lift only in narrow lanes for infantry assault and thus surprise the enemy.

Cover of night was widely used for troop movements, and smoke screens were sometimes used, as in the crossing of the Donetz in the summer of 1943. (This particular attempt, one of the most ambitious, was unsuccessful owing to enemy concentration of artillery fire directly into the smoke; Soviet use of smoke later improved.)

Noise deception was also used. Motors were sometimes left idling at night to create the illusion of mechanized forces on the move. In the autumn of 1941, Marshal of the Tank Troops Rotmistrov, then a colonel, is said to have

successfully used a few tractors without mufflers to simulate large tank movements.¹²

Another form of deception employed by the Soviets was the use of German equipment and uniforms in impersonation. Captured German aircraft were sometimes used for reconnaissance and partisan supply missions. The initial waves of an assault or even entire small units were often in captured German uniforms. German sources have attested to the success of this method of deception. In at least two cases impersonation was used for abduction of high German commanders. Thus,

In the summer of 1943, a German-speaking Russian in the uniform of a German officer succeeded in driving a German truck right up to headquarters of the Rovno military government detachment (Ortskommandantur), and in obtaining an audience with the commandant, a general. He gagged the commandant, wrapped him up in a big rug, carried him out to the truck which he had left idling outside, and delivered him to the partisans.¹³

In Lvov, in the spring of 1944, the same trick was used to murder the deputy governor of Galicia, and again the Russian escaped.

Ambushes, especially tank ambushes, were successfully used by the Soviets.¹⁴ Ambushes are usually employed in defense, especially in “fire pockets” in defense in depth. Tank ambushes are also used during a breakthrough to protect the flanks of troops creating the breach, to cover a withdrawal, and in parallel pursuit.¹⁵ Major Sviatkovsky has described the successful use of tank ambushes in the wooded and mountainous terrain of Hungary and Czechoslovakia.¹⁶ In the area east of Warsaw in 1944, a tank regiment set up a number of simple ambushes as follows: two tanks and a self-propelled gun would form a team, the concealed tanks flanking the gun. The self-propelled gun (tank destroyer) would then advance openly, firing on places where enemy tanks were believed to be and, if the enemy replied, withdraw. The German tanks would come out after the lone gun, and when they had passed the concealed Soviet tanks, one of the latter would fire on them from the rear while the other would fire as soon as they turned their guns to fire on the first tank. This proved quite successful.¹⁷

Infantry ambushes, used less frequently, were also successfully employed. Thus, in February, 1942, a small infantry unit permitted the Germans to know that its base was a certain village. A battalion was sent to clean it out, but found a prepared and fortified village; on withdrawing, the battalion was

raked by part of the force in ambush along the line of withdrawal. Only half the battalion returned after failing in its mission.¹⁸

According to an article in *Red Star* in 1940, “The art of camouflage in modern warfare assumes great importance, and the attitude toward it denotes the general level of military development.”¹⁹ The Soviets do not necessarily ascribe to the old dictum that “a mask is more important than a shield,” but rather that both a shield and a sword are all necessary for defense. In the early 1920’s, some argued that “strategic camouflage” would “find no role in maneuver warfare,” but this objection was never effective.²⁰ All regulations state, as did the 1936 *Field Regulations*, that “*Concealment of preparations is one of the most important conditions of success.*”²¹

The volume *Camouflage* stated that three methods of camouflage could be employed: concealment, deformation, and imitation. It described four fundamental principles of camouflage:

- 1) The principle of *naturalness*....
- 2) The principle of *variety*....
- 3) The principle of *unceasingness*....
- 4) The principle of *activity of camouflage*,²²

The 1940 *Field Regulations* also stated: “Camouflage must be natural, constant, and varied.”²³ The basis for the Soviet theory of camouflage was laid in the early 1920’s by Yatsuk, who, “as the result of investigation of the psychological aspect of deception in general,” stated three basic principles of camouflage:

- 1) The principles of *the community of details and variety of combinations*
- 2) The principle of *the naturalness of the deception*
- 3) The principle of *the activity of deception*,²⁴

This last principle was explained as the expression not only of the need for concealing the truth, but for creating favorable fiction.

Camouflage may be both natural and artificial in its form. Natural means include the use of darkness and bad weather, vegetation, and the terrain for concealment. Artificial means include smoke and cut vegetation and protective coloration by paint. Installations, airfields, aircraft (on the ground

and in flight), tanks, and large encamped units are camouflaged by a combination of these means.

Individual camouflage also combines the use of natural and artificial camouflage. Very early in the war, some Soviet units appeared in green or “leaf”-splotted uniforms, and even in face masks. White coverings for men and materiel proved to be of great value in the Finnish war. Camouflage discipline was highly developed, and men could remain in concealment for very long periods. Light discipline (tight control over any use of light at night) was well developed.²⁵ German and Finnish sources admitted that the Russians were “truly masters in devising means of camouflage.”²⁶

The staff for “operational camouflage” at the army level “has the leading role from the point of view of operational creativity, and the centralization of its execution.”²⁷

The engineers bear responsibility for complex camouflage preparation, but as experience in the war demonstrated, and as the book *Camouflage* stated:

In combat circumstances troops always camouflage themselves independently. Special camouflage and engineer units will be diverted for the fulfillment of camouflage work only in cases of technically complex work in camouflaging stationary objects.²⁸

According to Marshal of the Signal Troops Peresypkin:

The close camouflage of communication centers, and the approaches to them, was especially important. Aircraft were frequently used to check the quality of the camouflage.²⁹

Camouflage from aerial observation and attack is of course of great importance, both at the front and rear. One particularly ingenious form of camouflage was the use of “underwater bridges,” which were about one foot below the water. They were first developed in the Siberian-Manchurian battles of 1939, but were a total and unpleasant surprise for the Germans.

Surprise

The Imperial strategist Suvorov long ago wrote that “To surprise is to conquer”; and Soviet military doctrine has recognized the importance of

surprise. Before the Russian Revolution, Lenin wrote concerning military operations: “It is necessary to take the enemy by surprise.”³⁰

The prewar 1936 and 1940 *Field Regulations* stated that “*The most important condition of success of an offensive is surprise of the enemy*” and that “Surprise is one of the most important elements of maneuver and the attainment of success in battle.”³¹ *General Tactics* also included the statement, “Surprise of the blow is the most important guarantee of success.”³² The reason for this importance was stated in the 1940 *Field Regulations* to be that “Surprise stuns the enemy, paralyzing his will, and denying opportunities for organizing resistance...”³³ The securing of surprise is “the personal function of a commander,” and “command must secure complete surprise in all combat actions of troops.”³⁴

Current Soviet military doctrine recognizes many ways of achieving surprise in combat. Specifically, by

- (a) securing secrecy of intentions
- (b) concealment of concentrations and movements
- (c) positive deception “by false actions and information”
- (d) camouflage of men and machines
- (e) unanticipated overwhelming superiority of forces
- (f) unexpected use of new weapons or tactics
- (g) adroit maneuver and speed.³⁵

It is interesting to note that rather than stressing attack on unexpected sectors, the Soviets (in this case, Major General Vlasenko) usually stress correct “selection of the direction of the main blow,”³⁶ placing more reliance on unexpected superiority of forces than on the unexpectedness of the blow. General Vlasenko also wrote: “Bravery and decisiveness are the true sisters of surprise.” In a contemporaneous article, Major Shestak declared that “Military cunning [*khitrost*] is the sister of surprise.”³⁷

On June 22, 1941, surprise was complete, but it was surprise for the unprepared Soviets. This is indirectly admitted by the Soviets, but they claimed it to be the major German strategic error, because surprise is a “transitory” and not a “permanently operating” factor. As Lt. General Firsov wrote:

The unexpectedness and surprise of the blow was evaluated by the Fascist General Staff as the decisive strategic factor. Unexpectedness of the blow, in the enemy's opinion, had to be complete to disrupt the mobilization and deployment of our forces.

The Fascist militarists, overevaluating the significance of surprise, unconditionally accepted a mistaken strategic conception—the unconditional headlong offensive of “tank wedges” into a depth of 500–550 kilometers.... Such strategy, bearing a clearly adventuristic and stereotyped character, followed from an under-evaluation of our forces and an overestimation by the foe of his potentialities.³⁸

On November 6, 1941, Stalin declared:

The Germans now no longer have the military advantage they possessed during the first months of the war as a result of their treacherous and sudden attack. The element of surprise and suddenness, as a reserve of the German Fascist troops, is completely spent. This removes the inequality in fighting conditions created by the suddenness of the German Fascist attack. Now the outcome of the war will be decided not by such a fortuitous element as surprise, but by [the] permanently operating factors: stability of the rear, morale of the army, quantity and quality of divisions, equipment of the army, and organizing ability of the commanding personnel of the army.³⁹

It would, however, be a serious mistake to believe that the Soviets fail to appreciate the value of operational and tactical surprise, despite the many statements echoing Stalin's statement, above. Major General Isayev, after pointing out the primary importance of the permanently operating factors and the transitoriness of the strategic surprise, continued:

At the same time, the Stalinist art of war has furnished remarkable and incomparable examples of the utilization of the transitory factors which contribute to the success of operations. An instance of this is Comrade Stalin's unsurpassed mastery in ensuring the factor of surprise when dealing crushing blows, and in skillfully exploiting the results of surprise.⁴⁰

The General Staff study on *The Ten Crushing Blows* of 1944 stated that “The success of our offensive operations was achieved in significant degree by their surprise.”⁴¹ In many instances surprise is emphasized in operational and tactical actions, but is not mentioned in a strategic context. Thus, one source wrote: “The element of operational and tactical surprise is exploited in all the operations of the Red Army, and this explains why its initial blows are so powerful.”⁴² Colonel Baz' similarly stated that “Surprise, as is well known, often determines the success of a battle or operation.”⁴³ But Colonel Grigorenko, in 1946, even failed to limit his discussion to the tactical and operational levels. He stated:

Surprise, the unexpected descent on the foe, has always been considered a necessary condition of success. The correctness of this statement was confirmed in all the experience of the Great Fatherland War.⁴⁴

In general, while strategic surprise is seldom discussed in formal doctrine (because of the successful German surprise attack in June, 1941, and consequent explanation by Stalin of its “transitory” character), the fact of its effective use by the Germans doubtless impressed the Soviet leadership. Statements on strategic surprise must now term it “transitory,” and it is the only example available for contrast to the “permanently operating factors” of war. As the illustrations above indicate, the importance of tactical and operational surprise, or even of strategic surprise when used in conjunction with the “permanently operating factors,” is fully recognized.

Security

Complementing the Soviet emphasis on surprise is a strong stress on security against surprise by the enemy and against attempts to penetrate Soviet deception. The 1936 *Field Regulations* stated that “elements of the Red Army must always be prepared to answer by a lightning blow any surprise on the part of the foe,” and the 1940 *Field Regulations* stated that “Elements of the Red Army must never be caught unawares, and must by a decisive blow answer any surprise of the enemy.”⁴⁵

The great failure of the Red Army in June, 1941, only served to reinforce strongly this determination to be ever better prepared and more vigilant. Bolshevik thought has always demanded vigilance to parry deception and to ward off the enemy’s attempts to penetrate their deception.

Combat security is likewise stressed in Soviet doctrine, although in the recent war it was, in practice, frequently quite lax in the rear areas.*

* For example, American prisoners of war taken by the Germans and liberated by the Red Army in Poland and eastern Germany have declared that there were no guards at airfields; that sentries could not read the identification passes issued by the Red Army to these liberated prisoners of war; etc. (Cf. Major H. S. Ford, “Escape through the Red Army,” *The Infantry Journal*, Vol. 64, April, 1949, pp. 13–24.)

The general Soviet safeguards against hostile intelligence are well known: the minimization of contacts and hence opportunities for espionage, and a

widespread internal political police network. Specifically, there are fourteen “categories of military and economic information,” the disclosure of which is very severely punished. The fourteenth of these states: “Other information which *will be considered* by the Council of Ministers of the USSR as having been disclosed to unauthorized persons.”^{[46](#)}

As we have noted, the MVD is the military counterintelligence agency as well as the most important internal surveillance organization.

CHAPTER 17

PREPARATION, TRAINING, AND IMPROVISATION

Preparation

Soviet political and military doctrine places very high value on preparedness, both in terms of the “plan” based on “foresight” plus “intelligence” and of “vigilance” in meeting the unexpected [*sluchainost*’].

Preparation must be political (including morale), economic, industrial, and military. The 1936 *Field Regulations* emphasized the obvious requisite that “Every battle must be assured by the necessary material means.”¹ The entire political and military press reiterate constantly this need for “preparation.”

According to official and public Soviet statements, “the Communist Party under the leadership of Comrade Stalin” secures this necessary preparedness for the Soviet state with the aid of the increasing vigilance of the Party and people. Militarily, it is claimed that “*The Soviet state secures for its army all that is necessary for victory. ...*”²

Despite these affirmations and the great efforts which are required for and devoted to preparation, several startling examples of gross unpreparedness have occurred in recent Soviet history. The Finnish war, while not demonstrating the then often-alleged inherent inferiority of the Red Army, most certainly bore witness to its unpreparedness. In the initial assault, for the most part, reserve troops were used, not the best part of the Red Army; and in some cases they were burdened with propaganda literature and films. The establishment and rapid jettisoning by the Soviet government of the Finnish People’s Government under the long-exiled Finnish Communist,

Kuusinen, implies that the Soviet leadership was mistaken concerning the effect of the Finnish Communist Party. Divided command between the then coequal Political Administration and regular army command created considerable difficulty and led to the subsequent reduction of the political officers to deputy status. The weaknesses of lower-level command were also seen and partially corrected by intensive training at that level in the period 1940-1941.

The prime example of unpreparedness was, of course, the unreadiness to meet the German onslaught of June 21, 1941. Despite a warning from Churchill, and despite espionage both in the German Embassy in Tokyo and in the German staff giving the exact time and place 1 month and 2 weeks (respectively) in advance, the Soviet Army and leadership were totally unprepared.³ Their training schedule did not indicate any special vigilance or preparedness; in some cases maneuvers were in progress at the time of the invasion, and it is reported that in one sector for 9 hours the Soviet troops failed to reply with fire because they had no orders. The tremendous losses in men and materiel in the early months of the war cannot be explained (and are ignored) by the Soviet propaganda in its claims of a planned strategy of active defense in depth; they were the sacrifice to unpreparedness.*

* For a more detailed review of the happenings and specific statistics and for sources supporting the generalizations made above, see Appendix II, "The Trial by Arms: June to December, 1941," pp. 423ff.

Soviet research preparation manifests a combination of wide experimentation with narrow selection for standardization and production. For example, the recurrent appearance of a relatively rich variety of test models of aircraft in Moscow air displays is followed by subsequent appearance in quantity of relatively few of these (such as the MiG-15 fighter and Tu-4 bomber).

In addition, there is a strong tendency toward simplification by standardizing weapons of all types, and by maximizing interchangeability of parts for flexibility and simplicity in mass production. Soviet armor well exemplifies the importance accorded to simplicity in Soviet doctrine. While the Germans had twelve armored and twenty unarmored vehicles in use in 1942, the Soviets concentrated on the production of two tanks: the T-34 and JS series.⁴ Similarly, while the Germans had up to 170 different types of artillery ordnance, the Soviets concentrated production on a relatively few types. In aviation, the Soviets produced only 5 fighter types, 6 attack and bomber types, and 2 transport types in the war period (1941-1945). (In this

same war period, the United States produced 17 different fighter types, 23 attack and bomber types, and 15 transport types.) Simplicity is also expressed in the wide interchangeability of major parts; thus, the self-propelled guns are all mounted on the corresponding tank chassis—the SU-85 and SU-100 on the T-34, the JSU-122 and JSU-152 on the JS-3—Moreover, the standard tanks and guns listed above all have the same basic diesel engine.⁵ Finally, tractors are built on the same chassis, facilitating easy conversion to war production.

Another example of the Soviet emphasis on simplicity and efficiency is the extensive practice of leaving unfinished the outer surfaces of tanks, artillery, and the like. In contrast with the smooth finished form given to American materiel, the Soviets concentrate on the working mechanism and leave the unessential surfaces rough.

Training

Soviet doctrine, supported in practice, stresses the need of constant attention to training and to improving the skill of officers and men. Stalin urged in one of his wartime orders of the day:

... We must continue to perfect the military training of the men and the military skill of the commanders of our Army. It is the Red Army's duty day after day to improve its skill in the art of war, unceasingly and thoroughly to study the enemy's tactics, skillfully and opportunely to see through his crafty designs and to oppose the enemy's tactics with our own more perfect tactics. The fighting experience and achievements of the outstanding units and formations of the Red Army must be acquired by *all* our troops; the *entire* Red Army, *all* its men and officers must learn to fight the enemy according to all the rules of modern military science.⁶

In another wartime message he indirectly admitted that an inadequate level of training prevailed:

The Red Army possesses all that is needed to accomplish this lofty task [victory]. It lacks only one thing—the ability to utilize to the full against the enemy the first class material with which our country supplies it. Hence it is the task of the Red Army ... to study assiduously, to study the mechanism of their weapons to perfection, to become expert at their jobs and thus learn to strike the enemy with unerring aim.⁷

In training, in peace and in war, the experience of previous battles and wars is taken as the foundation. Major General Fomichenko wrote: “In training and instructing their men, Soviet commanders utilize the experience of every battle, the exemplary action of troops and the feats of individual men and officers.”⁸

Training is closely tied to the direct requirements of anticipated combat situations. In the words of Major General Smirnov and Colonel Soborov,

The decisive principle determining the essence of the Soviet method of combat preparation is the Stalinist principle of teaching the troops whatever is necessary for them to do in war, and of teaching them how it is necessary to do it. Guided by this principle, the Soviet military school, significantly in advance of the bourgeois military school, worked out the many-sided forms of tactical studies.⁹

Major General Fomichenko described this in more detail, again emphasizing the importance of past combat experience:

The underlying principle of the system of training in the Red Army is to teach the men *all* that is needed in action and *only* what is needed in action.

.....

Actual experience of the army in action is made wide use of in training. Many regimental staffs keep albums of cuttings from army newspapers and magazines, arranged according to type of action. They are studied by commanders for their own instruction.

.....

*All training is carried out under conditions approximating as closely as possible to actual battle conditions.*¹⁰

Since the war, intensive combat training and maneuvers, simulating actual combat situations as closely as possible, indicate that Suvorov’s maxim, “Hard on the training ground, easy on the battlefield,” holds a significant place in Soviet doctrine. In wartime, heavy training was conducted at all times when not in actual combat and was intensified immediately prior to an operation. Col. General Chanchibadze described the first phase of an offensive operation as “the teaching and training of troops in the accomplishment of those specific tasks which were placed on them for the coming operation.”¹¹ Tikhonov, a correspondent, also observed that in Leningrad

The period of relative calm which preceded our attacks was used by the High Command to perfect the battle training of the units of the Leningrad front. The soldiers not only learnt to master their

weapons, but were also trained systematically in the actions they were to engage in when attacking, and in the complicated and peculiar conditions of our actions of the front. The experience of the best Russian army leaders was drawn upon in the organization of this preparatory training.¹²

A system of “variants” is worked out by the staffs to cover all probable contingencies for a planned attack (and presumably also for defense). “In accordance with each variant a strict plan of action was outlined.. stated another Soviet observer.¹³

One further clarification of wartime preparation should be made, concerning tactical preparation by rehearsal. Marshal Timoshenko is generally credited with initiating this form of preparation in the Finnish war. Following the failure of the initial plan for the invasion of Finland, Timoshenko instituted a training program duplicating the fortifications, terrain, and climate of the Finnish Mannerheim Line, a device which proved reasonably successful.¹⁴ In tactical preparation, at least in some units, there is a rehearsal in miniature in a “company sandbox” of about 20 by 30 meters for practice exercises on this simulated terrain model. The use of such sandbox models has been reported both in infantry and combined tank-attack aviation planning.¹⁵

In peacetime, the usual method of training is by combining theory and practice: instruction and study, plus drill and practice. War games and field maneuvers play a quite important role in peacetime training, because they combine military theory and practice and most closely simulate actual combat.

The types of preparation, including maneuvers, which are presently used by the Soviet Army were discussed at some length by Major General Miasnikov in 1946. He distinguished five basic forms of operational training:

- 1) conferences and seminars
- 2) map studies
- 3) military games
- 4) operational game problems
- 5) field maneuvers.¹⁶

The “conferences and seminars” of staff and command personnel study four types of problems: (1) the solution of operational tasks; (2) research on

separate problems of military history; (3) historical studies of the chief operations in the Great Fatherland War; and (4) the study of combat technology and the tactical employment of troops.¹⁷

Military games [*voennaia igra*] are explained “by content” as (1) command staff, (2) staff (direction of a Front, army, and corps), (3) rear, (4) special, and (5) military historical (on the background operations of the Great Fatherland War, which have a lesson). They are also distinguished “by composition” as being (1) unilateral (asymmetric); or (2) bilateral (symmetric), first, second, and third degree; and also as being either “with or without communication means.”¹⁸

The operational game problem [*letuchka*] is similar, but not the same. Miasnikov described the difference as follows:

The fundamental distinction between an operational game problem and a military game is that the latter, embracing the operation as a whole, demands of the participants many decisions depending on the development of events. In the game problem only the evaluation of circumstances and taking of one decision is required, particularly in the crisis situation of an operation or a battle. Game problems can be by content command, staff, rear, and special; and by composition unilateral and first degree.... Two or three hours is allowed for decision.¹⁹

Lt. General Vechny discussed field maneuvers [*polevaia poezdka*] in more detail. He stated that “Their general aim is the training and the perfection of the command and staff of all types of troops, in the resolution of definite operational-tactical tasks, in conditions approximating those of action.”²⁰

Describing the particular form and aims of field maneuvers, he stated that there are five general types: operational, operational-tactical, rear, special, and military historical, depending on their objectives and scale.²¹ Field maneuvers were widely used by the Red Army as early as the 1920's; according to the former Imperial Major General Svechin, more than they were used prior to the Revolution.²² At this time, the instructional essence of such preparation was already seen. As Egorev wrote, “In general, the basic thought of maneuvers must be not ‘to examine,’ but ‘to teach’; war brings the examination.”²³ The basic maneuvers, then as now, were actual historical military actions. To cite the same source: “It is especially useful to take themes for war games from military history, especially from well known episodes.”²⁴ For example, the Frunze Military Academy conducted a field maneuver by the 32d Army Corps in early 1941 based on the “Brusilov

breakthrough” of 1916.²⁵ In 1940-1941, maneuvers were also conducted on the basis of examples taken from the very recent Finnish war. Since the Soviet-German war, operations and battles in it have formed the basis for maneuvers.²⁶

Wartime training of the soldiers was often far from satisfactory, and peacetime training is far from excellent. During the war, a period of 3 or 4 months was generally considered adequate for training infantry. Tank and mechanized forces, especially drivers, were also inadequately trained. For example, General Haider noted in his diary, on July 12, 1941, that “Russian tank drivers [are] reported showing little driving skill. Many track failures. Crews nervous under fire.”²⁷ And according to another high German source,

The training of the individual tank driver was inadequate; the training period apparently was too short, and losses of experienced drivers were too high. The Russian avoided driving his tank through hollows or along reverse slopes, preferring to choose a route along the crests that would present fewer driving difficulties. This practice remained unchanged even in the face of unusually high tank losses.²⁸

Artillery and air force training was generally better but left much to be desired. In all arms, inadequately trained men had to be committed to combat during the first half of the war to hold the line. This situation continued to prevail, in the infantry especially, throughout the war. Toward the end of the war, the Soviets had expended all trained reserves in previous efforts.

Air Force training was generally adequate but “rough” by Western standards. Regular VVS flyers were given 70 hours’ flying during a 7-to-9-months’ course (depending on the weather and the individual), and ADD flyers were given a better 120-flying-hour course.²⁹ Even after the war, at least as late as mid-1946, newly trained flyers upon arrival at German bases for occupation service had to be retrained or sent back for further training.³⁰ The high command did exercise great flexibility in aviation-officer training during the war, rapidly shifting trainees as new proportions of flyers were needed.

Since the war, great efforts have been made to overcome the gaps in training imposed by wartime pressure and to raise the standards of performance.

Improvisation

Improvisation is discussed in this chapter as a form of on-the-spot spontaneous preparation. It is encouraged and highly developed in wartime in supply, construction work, camouflage, equipment repair, and salvage of enemy (and Soviet) materiel and arms.³¹ The Soviet supply system is frequently poorly organized and planned, but the ability of the Soviet Army to undergo a substandard supply system is considerable, and adequate efficiency is maintained. Soviet doctrine implicitly recognizes the important role of improvisation in acquiring food and construction materials, although explicit recognition of this is limited to directives on salvage and the use of captured enemy equipment and the like. To note but one example given in an official Soviet military publication, two Soviet captains are said to have camouflaged some captured tractors to simulate tanks and to have gained a minor tactical point by attacking with them.³² This incident is useful as an example of the type of improvisation favored in Soviet military doctrine.

Improvisation is a source of research “from below.” New ideas concerning it are encouraged, and, when they are found to be especially promising, the practicality of introducing the innovation as standard procedure or equipment is examined by the appropriate institute.

Improvisation is often a counterbalance to gaps in or failures of official preparation or training, although not so admitted or presented. While it is often very useful and, indeed, indispensable, it is also frequently uncertain and wasteful.

CHAPTER 18

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE REAR

The Soviet Conception of the Rear

The Soviet concept of the rear embraces not only those supply, administrative, and training functions and areas usually included in this term, but all Soviet society. Voroshilov indicated the scope of the rear as it is broadly defined in Soviet doctrine:

In the idea of the stability of the rear is included all that constitutes the life and activity of the whole state-social system, politics, economy, the apparatus of production, the degree of organization of the working people, the ideology, science, art, the morale of the people, and other things.¹

The Soviet conception of the rear, therefore, is the entire country, “reorganized on a military basis and arranged for service to the front.”²

The experience of the Russian Civil War was considered an example of this, despite the fact that the Bolsheviks had only slightly less opposition from their rear than had their opponents. Frunze and others believed that the experience of the First World War, and especially of the Civil War, required “a revaluation [upwards] of the question of the role and significance of the rear” in military operations.³

Stalin stressed the importance of the rear in 1918, when he said: “An army cannot exist without a strong rear. For a stable front it is necessary that the army regularly receive provisions, ammunition, supplies from the rear.”⁴ In 1919 and again in 1920, Stalin declared: “No army in the world can be victorious without a stable rear.”⁵ With full realization of the importance of morale, he added: “The rear is the first concern for the front since it feeds the front not only all manner of supplies, but also people-fighters with morale

and ideas. An unstable, and yet more a hostile, rear will without fail transform even the best, most compact, army into a crumbled mass.”⁶ Stalin referred frequently to the importance of the rear and to alleged Soviet superiority in that relation. His speech *On the Three Peculiarities of the Red Army* (1928) stressed the strength of the rear. Declaring that although even greatest armies in the past have disintegrated because they lacked a strong rear, he concluded: “Our army is the only one in the world which has the sympathy and support of the workers and peasants. In that is its strength, in that is its fortress.”⁷ In accordance with this, Stalin later predicted that in case of war, the rear and the front of the Soviet Army, because of their “homogeneity and unity,” would be “stronger than in any other country.”⁸ In late 1941, he declared that the war had, in fact, “converted our country into one all-inclusive rear which serves the front.”⁹ After the war, Stalin’s earlier formula was reversed to deduce the support of the people for the regime from the fact of victory. The Soviet military press frequently repeats Stalin’s stress on the importance of the rear and the contention that the Soviet Union and its allies possess a strong, reliable one.¹⁰

Soviet emphasis on the importance of the rear stems, in part, from the origin of Bolshevism as a tiny conspiratorial element in Imperial Russia, which later contributed to, and still more capitalized on, the disintegration of the morale of the Russian rear. Soviet stress on the use of subversive and disaffected forces abroad, on the use of tight controls against the emergence of such forces within the Soviet Union, and on the use of partisan guerrillas is further evidence of the importance of the rear in Soviet military doctrine. (On the tactical level, the wide Soviet use of flanking and encircling maneuvers reflects this same stress on isolating the enemy from his rear, fragmenting his compact unity.)

The Operation of the Rear Services

In its more restricted military meaning, the rear refers to the sources of supply to combat forces. Soviet military doctrine requires that “*under any circumstances, the rear must satisfy all needs of the troops.*”¹¹ Four specific tasks are assigned to it (as of 1946):

- (a) to supply troops of the operating army with all that is necessary,
- (b) to deliver reinforcements required by the troops,
- (c) to serve the troops in an administrative relation, and
- (d) to free the troops of the operating army from all that hinders their combat action.¹²

The rear services include ration and fuel supply, transportation, communications, medical corps, rail and road construction and maintenance (except at the front), the maintenance of supply depots and reserves, and, when necessary, evacuation.

The rear services of the Soviet Army are combined under a single Chief of the Rear [*Nachalnik Tyla.*] Colonel Lavrov described this organization (in 1946) as follows:

The chief of the rear organizes the work of the rear, uniting the activity of all the chiefs of the services, who are required to fulfill the instructions [*ukazaniia*] on questions of the overall organization of the rear, transport, and evacuation, without depending on establishment of immediate subordination of some services. Chiefs of the types of troops and services conduct supply and servicing of the troops in their speciality directly.¹³

This form of organization is found at all levels of the Soviet Army—beginning with the army as a whole, down through the regiment, the lowest level possessing its own rear.¹⁴ It is emphasized that the “organization of the rear and material-technical supply has decisive significance for the success of the offensive.”¹⁵

Considerable stress is placed on long-term planning and on the preparing of the “plan” of the rear. For a long preparation, “preliminary” and “final” periods are established. “The second [final] period of preparation begins after the adoption of a final decision on the operation by the Front [Army Group] command. Most often such a decision is taken 10 to 15 days before the beginning of the offensive. In that time the plan of organization of the rear and materiel of supply for the operation is conclusively made....”¹⁶ The order governing this preparation is determined by the Chief of the Rear, in consultation with the chiefs of the various rear services. As Lt. General Zagi described it:

The order [*prikaz*] on the rear must be signed by the commander, chief of staff, and chief of the rear. In exceptional cases the order can be signed by the chief of the rear alone, but in that case he takes full responsibility. The plan of organizing the rear, planning of transport and all means of the

rear can be the subject of discussion by the chief of the rear and the chiefs of the types of troops and services together. The decision on this is taken by the chief of the rear independently, and only the commander can change this decision.¹⁷

Colonel Lavrov indicated that while this order is basic, it is not all-inclusive. “The establishment of a plan of the organization of the rear and materiel supply as a single document was an extremely rare phenomenon in practice. ... As a rule, an order [*prikaz*] (directive) [*direktiv*] on the rear is established by the front command as a basis for working out a plan for the organization of the rear and materiel supply for the operation, simultaneously with the plan. This is the basic document on the organization and direction of the rear of a Front.”¹⁸ The rear advances, following the front line, “according to a previously worked out plan.”¹⁹

Logistics, Supply, and the Noncombat Services

Logistics and supply have always been critical factors in Soviet (and Russian) military operations, or indeed in those of any army located in Russia. The stresses of the recent war required an increased centralization of the rear, even though previous Soviet doctrine maintained that “leadership of the rear must be constructed on the principle of rigid centralization.”²⁰ Thus, Colonel Lavrov explained:

The increase during the course of the war of the operational mobility of troops in the limits of a Front [Army Group] offensive operation affected not only the quantity, but also the quality of the work of the rear. In our prewar, and in a large measure simplified, scheme of the rear, there was a more or less strict territorial limit of the functions of the work of the latter by links (Front, Army, and troop); combat practice created alterations and additions. The essence of these consisted of the fact that the rear found its place in the operations as a component element of the combat order of troops ... [creating] a much closer unity of the operational guidance and direction of the rear.²¹

For example, “The rear border of the First Belorussian Front at the time of the Vistula-Oder and Berlin operations was brought forward all at one time, despite the fact that the general depth of the rear of the Front advanced 600 kilometers, and the frontal rear region more than 400 kilometers.”²² Obviously the logistical difficulties in such cases are very great. Necessarily,

the “materiel supply of an operation was achieved by a combination of the systems of distribution of supplies with the system of the organization of transport. The degrees of the coordination of these two systems determines the effectiveness of the work of the rear.”²³ This, in turn, presupposed a combination of all forms of transportation under one chief.

Some appreciation of the nature of the Soviet supply problem is afforded by the fact that 18,000 tons of ammunition accumulated on the Völkov Front in early 1943 was used (by a force of 15 divisions) in the course of 6 days. The Bobruisk operation in 1944 used 25,000 tons of ammunition.²⁴ These problems magnified logistically as the war proceeded. Thus:

The average weight of a frontal unit of fire and refuel in 1945 rose by comparison to 1943 more than two times. It is necessary to underline this, that the tonnage of a unit of fire, refueling supplies, and daily rations can undergo significant alterations even in the course of the same operation, depending on changes in the combat personnel of the troops of the front. Thus, for example, in the course of the Vienna operation in 1945, the strengthening of the Third Ukrainian Front by new units increased the combat unit of fire of the Front twenty per cent, fuel twenty-two per cent, and rations and supplies seventeen per cent....

In times of encirclement, the quantity of ammunition needed may rise sharply. For example, the Crimean operation of 1944, the Königsberg, Vienna, and Berlin operations of 1945, the Stalin-grad, Korsun-Shevchenkovsky, Jassy-Kishinev operations.²⁵

Ammunition and fuel are given priority in logistics.

Former Soviet officers reported that the degree of inefficiency in Soviet supply during the recent war was matched only by the degree of corruption which accompanied it.²⁶ Similarly, the transportation system was sometimes used by high Soviet generals (and sometimes by junior officers acting ostensibly in the name of high officers) to send home vast quantities of loot, especially in the last months of the war and the months immediately following victory.²⁷

The Soviet railroad system, despite its great shortcomings, is the basic framework for military transportation.²⁸ The even greater lack of satisfactory roads, trucking systems, and latitudinal rivers necessitates this. Operating under the most difficult conditions, Soviet railroads during the recent war “remained the fundamental form of transport in the system of military communication” and “the main means of operational-strategic maneuver.”²⁹ This in spite of the fact that, according to Colonel Pavlenko, “The tempo of establishing railroads and especially bridges did not much increase in

comparison with the period of the First World War. Of course, separate sections of rail in the recent war were established very rapidly, up to twenty and more kilometers per day.”³⁰

The importance of the automobile in the Soviet military transportation system was demonstrated during the recent war, when advancing troops, sometimes separated from railroads by 200 to 300 kilometers or even more, received all their supplies by means of automotive transport.³¹ Pointing out that the automobile also played a tremendous role in Soviet operational maneuver, Colonel Pavlenko declared that at the time of the Berlin operation, over 10 divisions of the First Ukrainian Front were transferred by automotive transport to the region of Berlin and Lukenwald in only 10 days. “The swift maneuver of these troops had a decisive significance for the fulfillment of the operation in surrounding and annihilating the formations of the Ninth German Army, operating to the east of Berlin. Auto transport, although with great difficulty, secured provisions, supplies, and fuel for over 300 to 400 and even more kilometers.”³²

It should be recalled that the vast majority of Soviet infantry divisions used horse-drawn transport during the entire war.

The advance of a Soviet Army and its supply is much more haphazard than these Soviet sources indicate. The following passages by non-Soviet observers attest to the general impression. General Manteuffel (*Wehrmacht*) said:

The advance of a Russian army is something that Westerners can't imagine. Behind the tank spearheads rolls a vast horde, largely mounted on horses. The soldier carries a sack on his back with dry crusts of bread and raw vegetables collected on the march from the fields and villages. The horses eat the straw from the house roofs—they get very little else. The Russians are accustomed to carry on for as long as three weeks in this primitive way, when advancing. You can't stop them, like an ordinary army, by cutting their communications, for you rarely find any supply columns to strike.³³

General Collins (USA) wrote: “I saw some of the Communist forces when we first made our contacts with them in Europe and they had the doggonedest combination of vehicles that you ever saw in your life—wagons, oxcarts, buggies—taken from the countryside.”³⁴ General Arnold (USAAF) observed: “Their system of logistics was terrible. ... With such transportation it would be practically impossible for the Russian army ever to decide very far in advance upon a definite opening date for a campaign.”³⁵ Lt. General Martel

(UK) believed that the attribution of adequacy, if not of effectiveness, of this system should not be lost sight of. He also noted the importance of the Soviet soldier's willingness and ability to undergo deprivations. Concerning questions of Soviet military organization, he said:

Along with many other people I had assumed that the Russians must have an excellent organization in order to be able to keep going as they had done. I was most anxious to learn all about it, but I found that there was not very much to learn. Starting with ammunition supply, I wanted to know how many different echelons of supply they used and how many rounds per gun they carried in each echelon. However, it soon came to light that there were no particular echelons at all, quite apart from any question of the rounds per gun carried in each echelon. Taken as a whole, their supply system was on the hit and miss principle. It appeared to work quite reasonably well, but every now and then some formation would have to go without food or ammunition for a time. This did not cause the terrible concern that it would with us. It is not unusual for the Russian to have to go without food for a day. I do not mean that this was approved by the higher authorities or that they did not have a complete organization on paper....³⁶

It is important not to overestimate the relative freedom of the Soviet Army from supply by "living off the country." Colonel Ely (USA) stresses the fact that ammunition, fuel, and rations still require a very great supply from the rear, despite the unusual ability of the Soviet Army to forage and to endure deficiencies. Although the Soviet soldier's need to forage and the lack of formal discipline "did tend to cause the Red Army to present the aspect of a hungry horde of locusts," Colonel Ely says, "from a strategic viewpoint, an opportunity to cut the Soviet supply lines is almost as profitable as the interruption of supply of any other army."³⁷

The administrative and rear service "tail" of the Soviet Army is relatively much smaller than that of an equivalent Western (especially American) formation. General Marshall testified that out of every 100,000 men in the U.S. Army in a combat theater, only 23,000 can be in combat, while comparable figures for the Soviet Army are 80,000 men in combat.³⁸

Maintenance of equipment, including vehicles, is on a relatively unsatisfactory level, but greater efforts are devoted to materiel recovery and repair, so that the net result may approximate Western maintenance. Motor vehicles are kept in pools rather than in units, so that they may be more economical despite a shorter life; but drivers are unusually hard on machines.³⁹

Signal communications troops are also subordinated to the Chief of the Rear. Communications, although adequate, were not (despite Soviet claims)

highly developed during the war. Wireless communications remain deficient today, although since 1941 the highest Soviet Army directives have demanded use of radio as “the fundamental means of communication in maneuver war.”⁴⁰ Soviet writers since the war have attested that “radio communication has now become the chief means of direction.”⁴¹ Telephonic communication is widely used in static situations.

Soviet medical services are also subordinated to the Chief of the Rear. Soviet medical aid is much less extensive than Western medical aid—the Soviet Army maintains only one-third as many medical personnel in the field as does the U.S. Army. Only subprofessional medical personnel are provided through the battalion level. Medical facilities for air force and naval personnel are superior to those for ground force personnel. (In the Zone of the Interior, however, all are usually merged.) As a consequence, wounded recoveries and returns to duty are lower than in the Western armies.⁴² Contrary to Western practice, Soviet hospitalized soldiers received lower rations than front-line soldiers.

In addition to these transportation, supply, communication, and medical services, the rear (rather than the engineers) is responsible for road and railroad maintenance, construction, and repair (except at the front), and for the recovery and repair of equipment and vehicles. Although Soviet production and allocation statistics are beyond the scope of this study, it is necessary to note that they were arranged at the level of the GKO (State Defense Committee) by the commissariats and the arms and the rear services concerned. Soviet sources give production statistics for the 1943-1945 period (in figures of annual production) which indicate a very high productive effort.⁴³

It should be emphasized that although Soviet doctrine and practice on the organization and operation of the rear services and logistics was frequently badly organized, inefficient, and uncertain during the recent war, it nonetheless proved adequate in performing its function.

PART III

SOVIET DOCTRINE ON THE

OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL

EMPLOYMENT OF THE COMBAT

ARMS

A general discussion of the Soviet organizational, operational, and tactical doctrine on the employment of the combat arms. Most of the data are from sources dating from World War II or relating to World War II experience. While the validity in current doctrine of these ideas is considered to be high, postwar technological developments and the new strategic situation of the USSR have modified some aspects of Soviet doctrine.

CHAPTER 19

SOVIET EMPLOYMENT OF

GROUND FORCES

A major part of this study has been concerned with the ground forces because of their predominant role in the Soviet armed forces. This chapter reviews briefly the missions and tactical doctrine of each of the ground forces in Soviet military doctrine.

Infantry

The infantry is termed “queen [*tsaritsa*] of the battlefield” and occupies the central place in combined arms cooperation. Since the war there has been a tendency to modify this situation, but previous military regulations and writing stressed this, and the legacy remains strong.

The 1936 and 1940 *Field Regulations*, the 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat*, and the 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* all explicitly state that “*The infantry is the main type of troop*” and that “The infantry ... determines the outcome of battle.”¹ These regulations further state and repeat that “Combined action of all types of troops is organized in the interests of the infantry, who fulfill the main role in combat.”²

This fact is taught not only to infantry officers, but, for example, to the young air force officers who read in the official textbook, *Aviation Tactics*, that “Therefore the assignment of other types of troops participating in

combined combat with the infantry is to act in its interests, securing its advance in the offensive, and steadfastness in defense.”³

Increased attention directed to the aviation, armored, and artillery arms has been explicitly stated not to mean that the infantry is no longer “the basic arm.”⁴

A possibly significant sign of the modification of this idea is found in the omission, for the first time, from the 1944 *Field Regulations*, of an explicit statement of the infantry’s being the basic type of troop. More recent commentaries, however, continue to stress this central role. Radio Moscow, on November 7, 1950, interpreted the Korean war experience as proving that “despite the assertions of the ill-starred American strategists, the basic arm remains the infantry, ably coordinating its action with all other arms.”⁵

In the Soviet-German war, the practice almost invariably was to give highest commands in combined operations to infantry commanders. German and Soviet accounts usually consider the infantry to have been the mainstay of the Soviet Army in the recent war.

The Soviet infantry (or “rifle”) division was in the process of reduction to 11,000 men in June, 1941. When General Eisenhower told Marshal Zhukov that American divisions were maintained at 17,000 men, Zhukov was astonished and remarked that while he attempted to maintain a strength of 8000 men, divisions frequently would be depleted to a strength of 3000 to 4000 in a long campaign.⁶

This was doubtless a product of the Soviet system of not reinforcing a unit by replacement to maintain full strength, but rather of letting it wear down to a fraction of its size and rebuilding a new division in the rear on the remnants of several former divisions.

Since the end of World War II, the Soviet Army has shown considerable concern regarding the modernization of its infantry arm. The “new type” of rifle division has been much improved and its mobility has been increased. A Soviet rifle division at present numbers approximately 11,000 men, and although it has more fire shock power per man than a U.S. infantry division, it has less organic transport and less staying power, owing to the weaker organic services. There is a large proportion of small and medium automatic weapons. In addition to the improvement of the rifle division, the number of rifle divisions has declined as former infantry divisions have become mechanized. The Soviet Army of today is very much stronger division for division than in 1945.

Despite the central role assigned the infantry in the Soviet-German war, its manpower received the least desirable recruits. The air forces, artillery, armored forces, navy, and special troops get the best educated, most literate, and most intelligent men. The poor-quality infantry were used as shock troops and were considered to be “cannon fodder”^{*} to a greater extent than in any other European army. Zhukov explained to Eisenhower that the Soviet method of clearing known mine fields of antipersonnel mines was simply to send the full infantry formations across them. He explained, “The losses we get from personnel mines we consider only equal to those we would have gotten from machine guns and artillery if the Germans had chosen to defend that particular area with strong bodies of troops instead of mine fields.”⁷ Soviet lack of concern over heavy infantry losses was pronounced, heavy losses being considered inevitable in an engagement. By 1945, substantial reserves of trained manpower of the Soviet Union had been heavily drained. Again, the Soviets have vigorously sought to overcome this weakness since the end of the war.

^{*} For example, General Haider noted in his *Diary: Campaign in Russia*, Vol. 6, July 5, 1941, in the Russian attacks, “Infantry attacking as much as twelve ranks deep, without heavy weapons support; the men start hurrahing from afar. Incredibly high Russian losses.” Lt. Gen. Kurt Dittmar also noted that “It was a characteristic feature of Russian tactics to keep on attacking without any recognizable change of procedure. No doubt, their great and bloody losses were due primarily to this method of combat.” (See *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 8, 1950, p. 81.)

Artillery

Artillery is often termed “the main striking force” of the Soviet Army. While regarded as a supporting arm to the infantry, it plays a relatively more significant role than in the West. Stalin remarked on May Day, 1937, that “Whoever thinks that one can win a war with mighty aviation alone is deeply mistaken. If we look back into history we see what an important role artillery has played in all wars.”⁸ This remark may have been prompted by an attendant purge of strategic airpower adherents at this time. The latter were purged, but whether a calculated doctrinal change was intended is not completely clear.

Stalin once called artillery “the God of war” (at the time of the Finnish campaign), and in one of his wartime general orders (No. 225, of November

19, 1944) described it as “the main striking force of the Red Army.”⁹ Virtually all Soviet articles and books dealing even cursorily with artillery mention at least one of these tributes. It is often called “the main means of suppression,” and as early as in the 1936 *Field Regulations* it was stated that “Artillery possesses the most force and might of fire of all types of ground troops.”¹⁰ Lt. General Prochko stated in 1946 that

Our military doctrine fought against the “theories” which belittled the role of artillery in contemporary war. Tanks and aviation, no matter how broad their development, cannot replace artillery. Artillery was and continues to be the most mighty weapon of the Red Army.¹¹

Some friction exists between artillerists and air force exponents over the relative importance of each. This is briefly discussed in the following chapter.

The proud Russian tradition regarding artillery continues in the Soviet Army, along with belated but now hyperbolic recognition of other Russian achievements. Thus, the Soviets celebrated, in 1939, the 550th anniversary of Russian artillery, tracing the “origin” of artillery back to Dimitri Donskoi, and stressing the role of Peter the Great.

In the early 1920’s, a rather strong dispute between the artillery and the infantry was waged over infantry command of the former, and both antagonists showed inadequate understanding of the capabilities of the other arm. One infantry officer quoted an early Soviet military journal as instructing the artillery: “Fire often and loudly; it doesn’t make any difference where, just so long as it isn’t on our men.”¹² This dispute was resolved in favor of the infantry, as “the main type of troop,” although the 1936 and 1940 *Field Regulations* continued the 1929 *Regulations’* division of artillery into “infantry support” and “long-range” artillery groups.

The 1936 *Field Regulations*, while clearly indicating a central role for the infantry, stated:

Artillery possesses the most force and might of fire of all types of ground troops. Its fire acts deeply against the manpower and fire means of the opponent, openly disposed and concealed, against the artillery and tanks of the opponent; it similarly strikes the opponents’ air power also. Artillery fire clears a path for all land troops in the offensive and impedes a path of the foe in defense. Artillery is a mighty means for levelling long-term fortifications.¹³

Tukhachevsky stressed in his commentary on these *Field Regulations*: “The infantry, cavalry and tanks must in all phases of combat be supported by

artillery fire.”¹⁴

Repeating this dominant fire support mission of artillery, the 1940 *Field Regulations* declared that “Artillery preparation is the most important means of securing the success of an attack,” and that “In organizing the offensive, the senior commander directs special attention to the combat utilization of artillery.”¹⁵ Emphasis is placed on direct support of the infantry and tanks by the artillery. As the 1936 *Field Regulations* directed: “The contact between the infantry and artillery must not be permitted to break for a single moment under any circumstances....”¹⁶ Many statements are made that “The final aim of artillery action is to assist the infantry and tanks to fulfill their mission,”¹⁷ and that “The decisive role in this infantry support is played by artillery fire capable of annihilating, destroying, and conquering all the enemy’s means of defense.”¹⁸

During the war the use of field artillery underwent five main changes:

- 1) The increase in concentration of weapons,
- 2) The introduction of the “artillery offensive,”
- 3) The increased centralization of artillery command,
- 4) The wide use of artillery pieces in direct fire, and of mortars,
- 5) The increased use of self-propelled artillery.

In our discussion of the principle of the concentration of force in Soviet doctrine, we have seen that the Soviet emphasis on massing artillery fire during the course of the war led to a norm of 300 artillery pieces per kilometer of front line, and in some operations to even higher concentrations.¹⁹ Stalin, at Yalta, advised the Western Allies to follow the Soviet example in building up the “tremendous artillery superiority” to which he ascribed the then recent swift advance of the Red Army in February, 1945.²⁰

Stalin (the High Command) issued a directive in January, 1942, introducing “for the first time in the history of military art” the concept of “the artillery offensive” [*artilleriiskoe nastuplenie*]. Briefly summarized, “The artillery offensive consists of constant support of the infantry and tanks by massed, active artillery and mortar fire during the entire course of the offensive.”²¹ The artillery offensive consists of three uninterrupted stages: preparation, support to the assault, and assistance in securing gains.²² Two

artillery officers have described this in detail. They drew a sharp distinction between the artillery offensive and prior artillery action: “Before that [Stalin’s directive] the action of artillery was essentially limited to so called ‘artillery preparation’ for the attack.... Comrade Stalin’s directive led to a revolution in the view of the overall commanders and artillery commanders, as in the form of combat itself.”²³ In fact, the change was not so radical, and although it effected an important and useful increase in artillery employment, it merely implemented more fully previous doctrine on constant support. The fact that such a mere extension of the use of artillery was regarded (or at least described) as a “revolution” is not without significance as a clue to “formal” Soviet doctrine, which, while usually not deceptive (unless confused with actual degree of performance), often exaggerates alleged “Stalinist innovations” and Soviet doctrinal “superiorities.” The artillery offensive is considered to implement best the principle of combined arms.²⁴

The most significant development in the Soviet employment of artillery was not the vaunted “artillery offensive,” but the radical creation of a very powerful Artillery Reserve of the High Command (ARGK). In late 1941, after the initial loss of a very large percentage of Soviet artillery, Marshal Voronov persuaded Stalin to strip the infantry divisions of much of their remaining organic artillery and to begin creating a powerful reserve.²⁵ By 1943, each division had been deprived of one of its two artillery regiments. Artillery was then created in regiments, divisions, armies, and even corps (of 80 battalions) and disposed of “on loan” by the High Command; it was commanded by artillery officers under the senior over-all (usually infantry) commander. This made for great strategic flexibility and powerful massed blows, but failed to provide the desirable ability to advance quickly in an offensive, thus making consolidation more difficult and requiring long preliminary preparation for a new offensive. This difficulty in advancing is not admitted by Soviet military writing, some writers even praising the alleged ability of the artillery to advance with the infantry. In general, artillery officers prefer this system of separate command. Postwar Soviet doctrine has modified this practice (the infantry and mechanized divisions now have two artillery regiments organic in each), but has retained the centralized strategic reserve system.

During the Soviet-German war, wide use was made of artillery in direct-fire [*priamaia navodka*] positions on the front line (at ranges from 200 to 900 yards). Begun in 1941 as a necessity, the advantages of close control and

economy of ammunition led to the permanent adoption of this tactic. Authoritative estimates indicate that approximately one-fourth of Soviet artillery was usually so employed.²⁶ Col. General Chibisov stated in 1946 that 30 direct-fire pieces should be used per mile of front. On a sector of the Volkhov Front in 1943 there were 44 direct-fire guns per mile, and at Sevastopol in 1944 the density of direct-fire pieces reached 70 guns per mile. At Berlin in 1945 a large percentage of artillery was so employed.²⁷

Wide use of mortars contributed considerably to heavy firepower. In the Soviet conception, mortars are classed as artillery. A separate Commissariat of Mortar Production was even created in 1941 (existing until 1945) to mass-produce mortars as a substitute for artillery while the artillery reserve was being assembled. Mortars continued to be used in great numbers and were employed in “mortar regiments” and even “mortar divisions.”²⁸

Another major development in the Soviet Army was the widespread use of self-propelled artillery [*samokhodnaia ustanovka*, or SU artillery]. In 1945 Marshal Rotmistrov, a strong exponent of tank warfare, urged self-propelled guns to supplement (not to replace) both tanks and artillery as an integral part of armored units. In substantial measure his ideas were adopted. The failure of artillery to accompany the infantry and tanks in their successful advance called forth the need for more mobile artillery. Rotmistrov wrote:

The rapid pace of offensive operations presented new requirements regarding maneuverability of artillery, and practice showed that if the attacking troops did not have artillery support at the right moment, it lost its significance at once. There is where self-propelled artillery comes in. By its firepower and mobility it supplements field artillery, assists tanks in battle, and aids in the development of the offensive.²⁹

Rotmistrov especially stressed the antitank role of such weapons and scornfully declared that “Field artillery is almost useless against modern tanks.”

Lt. General Prochko stated three principles of particular importance for the employment of artillery:

- to use our artillery *unexpectedly* for the enemy;
- to *mass* artillery in the decisive directions after a calculation of the reserves and secondary directions;
- to effect the closest *combined action* with the infantry, tanks, and aviation in all stages of battle....³⁰

Colonel Bugaev has distinguished four “qualities of artillery” governing its use: (1) distance of fire, (2) surprise, (3) flexibility of fire, and (4) mobility.³¹ The Soviet artillery fire-control system is fairly simple, having one or two spotting posts and some use of small organic spotter aircraft. Sighting methods are primitive relative to the most modern United States developments, but are effective in Soviet massed fire.

Contrary to the prevalent impression gained from the Soviet use of a mass concentration of artillery, artillery fire was mostly aimed and not blanket fire. It was used for blanketing narrow squares or zones in preparation, but was also aimed (especially at probable or known hostile fire points). The Soviets also used lines of introduction as targets, i.e., certain predesignated zonal lines were covered constantly in order to prevent, either by deterrence or destruction, enemy troops or tanks from advancing across them. This is said by former Soviet officers to have been quite effective.³²

In an offensive, the artillery laid down a powerful barrage from ½ to 6 hours in duration and, at the moment of assault, shifted its fire further to the enemy rear in narrow lanes about 100 meters wide, through which the infantry advanced while the barrage continued unabated elsewhere. In this manner the infantry attack could begin before the enemy was aware that the barrage had been partly lifted. (The toll exacted by defensive fire, because of miscalculation or misfire, was accepted as a necessary cost and was presumably lower than losses owing to the enemy’s fire once a barrage was lifted.)³³ Often, the entire barrage would cease deceptively so that surviving enemy guns would open fire and disclose their positions. Sometimes after about a 2-hour preparation, the artillery fire would suddenly stop simultaneously with the infantry-tank assault, but more frequently it would merely shift its fire deeper into hostile defense.

After a planned artillery preparation ended, the infantry-armor assault was launched as planned, regardless of surviving hostile fire points and other obstacles, and only defeat of this force brought about an unplanned resumption of the barrage.

Field antiaircraft artillery is organized in special batteries and regiments, the main tactical principle being the concentration of weapons and firepower (and also of losses, under attack). Soviet antiaircraft artillery never fully developed adequate tactics to meet the later German formation of “star raids,” with aircraft approaching from all directions.³⁴ Strategic antiaircraft defenses are organized independently.

Rocket [*reaktivnyi*] artillery is being developed, based in part on the German experiments, for both close- and distant-range weapons.³⁵ Each mechanized division and tank division has one rocket-launcher battalion (twelve weapons), and larger formations have special rocket artillery units attached. Guided-missile development in the USSR is also reported to be assigned mainly to the artillery administration.

Armored Forces

The Soviets were early in the development of armored forces and placed the great stress on their development in the 1930's.³⁶ Like the Germans and French, but unlike the British and Americans, the Soviets developed two types of armored formations: the "tank division" and the "mechanized division."^{*} Their missions have been described in our discussion of momentum and pursuit. Briefly, the tank division primarily employs its mass shock power to effect a penetration and breakthrough of strong enemy defense, and the mechanized division spearheads the pursuit and exploitation. The tank division, of about 10,500 men, has a relatively weak complement of organic infantry (about 2000 men) and artillery and is composed of 3 medium tank regiments, 1 heavy tank regiment, and 1 motorized rifle regiment. The mechanized division is more balanced, having a total complement of about 13,000 men in 3 mechanized infantry regiments, 1 medium-tank regiment, and 1 heavy-tank and self-propelled regiment. These regiments are, of course, internally balanced with some infantry in all tank regiments, and vice versa. The tank division has about 200 medium and 44 heavy tanks. Thus, the Soviet tank division approximates a U.S. armored division in tank strength (the U.S. division has 373 armored vehicles as compared with 250 to 300 for the Soviet division, although the Soviets have more heavy tanks), but is inferior in organic infantry (total strengths are 10,500 men in the Soviet tank division and 16,000 in the U.S. armored division). The Soviet mechanized division, with about 175 to 200 tanks and self-propelled guns, more closely approximates the U.S. infantry division with its 149 tanks, except that the Soviet division includes heavier tanks. Their personnel strengths are 12,800 men and 18,600 men, respectively.³⁷

* The Soviet tank division, with an unbalanced preponderance of tanks, is the equivalent of the German *Panzer* and French *Cuirassee* divisions; the mechanized division corresponds to the *Panzer Grenadier* and *Legere Motorisee*. In June, 1941, these formations were termed tank “brigades” and “motor-mechanized corps,” were retitled tank and mechanized “corps” (of 12,000 and 17,500 men, respectively) during the war, and in 1945 were designated tank and mechanized divisions.

A doctrine of tank warfare had been formulated in the 1936 *Field Regulations*, and was clarified and extended in Tukhachevsky’s 1937 commentary on these regulations, in the 1940 *Field Regulations*, and in the 1940 *General Tactics*,³⁸ Four combat characteristics were articulated:

- (a) high mobility;
- (b) mighty firepower;
- (c) mighty striking force, acquired by movement and mass of combat vehicles;
- (d) invulnerability to ordinary hand and machine gun fire and light artillery fragments.³⁹

Tukhachevsky (in 1937) stressed the fact that tanks had significance not only in infantry support, but also in independent action.⁴⁰ Until the war, however, armor continued to be distributed among infantry formations for close support.⁴¹ Artillery support for armor was stressed to such an extent that the advantage of mobility was sacrificed to the requirement of the regulations that “*In all cases, the tank attack must be insured by artillery support, and is not to be permitted without such support...*”⁴² Thus, in 1941, General Haider noted: “The Russian doctrine of tank attack: a little everywhere!”⁴³ A tremendous proportion of the initial Soviet strength was lost in the early weeks of the war: up to 17,500 out of 24,000 tanks (mostly obsolete).⁴⁴ Through most of 1942, tanks were decentralized, being attached to rifle divisions for support. In 1942 this concept was changed to employ tanks in mass, concentrated directly on the front (especially in the direction of the main blow) in immediate infantry support.⁴⁵ As with artillery, the High Command husbanded production and created mass formations. Beginning with the battle of Stalingrad, armored formations were committed in offensive operations as a direct accompaniment to infantry formations. After the battle of Kursk in 1943, and especially in 1944 and 1945, the use of tanks in mass became usual. Tank and mechanized “armies” of 3 or 4 armored

divisions (called “corps” until 1945) were created, bringing up to 1000 tanks under a single command.

Current Soviet doctrine on the employment of armor emphasizes the use of large tank formations in close combined operation with the infantry. In preparing for an offensive operation, armored formations were assembled in a zone 70 to 100 kilometers from the front line. From this collection area they advanced to a waiting position about 20 to 30 kilometers from the front. Finally, immediately prior to the launching of the offensive, they advanced (at night) to points of departure less than 10 kilometers from the front.⁴⁶ Following the artillery and air preparation, the infantry launched the assault, the first echelon of armor operating in direct and immediate support, not more than 200 to 400 meters to the rear. The second and third echelons of armor brought infantry with them through the breach.⁴⁷ During the war, a special form of combined action developed as a result of the necessity for infantry to accompany attacking tanks—tank-borne infantry, or the “tank descent” [*tankovyi desant*]. Col. General (then Major General) Katukov explained: “We call infantry mounted on tanks and utilizing them as a means of advance for closing with the enemy a tank descent.”⁴⁸ Usually there would be about ten men to each medium tank.

The primary mission of heavy tanks is destruction of enemy anti-tank defenses and weapons. Self-propelled artillery is used in immediate conjunction with the tank forces to provide flank and rear protection for them. The medium tanks neutralize hostile fire points. Armored forces in general coordinate their support of the infantry with artillery and aviation support.⁴⁹

The echelons of mechanized formations that follow later are intended to develop and extend successes.⁵⁰ But, as Lt. General Kovalev admitted, even in 1944, “Unfortunately, that requirement could not always be fulfilled. Often it was necessary for the tank formation [intended for the development of the breakthrough after its creation] to complete the breakthrough of the enemy defense together with the combined troop formation.”⁵¹ He cited the operations of Orel (1943) and Bobruisk and Vitebsk (1944) as exceptional cases of “the massed use of tanks with immediate infantry support” and of great success in breaking through the entire depth of the enemy defenses. This he contrasted with the early phase of the war:

Until the instructions of Comrade Stalin in early 1942 ... infantry commanders often assigned tasks to tanks hurriedly, and hence not concretely, and combined operations of tanks with the infantry and artillery was not organized in a competent fashion. These commanders threw tanks into battle in small groups and without account for their technical condition. Thus impermissible losses of tanks and tank personnel and mechanized troops, and also of the infantry, followed.^{[52](#)}

Tank formations played major roles in six of the great operations in the later part of the war: Stalingrad (1942), Kursk-Orel (1943), Korsun-Shevchenkovsky (1944), Belorussia (1944), Warsaw (1945), and Berlin (1945).^{[53](#)} In several cases, tank formations were successfully used in combined operation with cavalry. Thus, at Korsun-Shevchenkovsky in February, 1944, Rotmistrov's tank army and Selivanov's cavalry corps operated together, and again in 1944 cavalry assisted tank formations in the encirclement at Bobruisk.

Postwar doctrine re-emphasizes the avoidance of direct attack and the seeking of the enemy's flanks and rear.^{[54](#)} (This does not supersede the special mission of the tank division, which is shock assault on a strong hostile positional defense.) The 1944 *Combat Regulations of Tank and Mechanized Troops* stated:

The tank attacks with maximum speed, suppresses by intense fire on the run the guns, mortars, probable machine guns and infantry of the enemy, and by skillfully maneuvering, utilizes features of the terrain for exit on the flank or rear of the enemy firing means, avoiding head-on attack.^{[55](#)}

In defense, large armored formations were usually withdrawn and replaced by tank and self-propelled gun regiments until the offensive could be renewed or begun.* Tanks assigned for use in positional defense were usually dug in, with only the turrets above ground, as "tank fire nests" or small stationary fortresses (usually with alternate positions prepared). Reserve tank units were used for counterattacks. Soviet doctrine requires that

In all cases the commander of the tank formations must have a reserve. The reserve must be of such force that the commander of the formation can determine the outcome of the battle, developing the success of the striking group or defeating a surprise counterattack of the enemy.^{[56](#)}

In active defense in depth, small tank units are employed frequently in ambushes.^{[57](#)}

* This is similar to United States doctrine. As the U.S. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, states: "Tanks are essentially offensive weapons. They are held in reserve in a covered position out of effective artillery range until the situation is favorable for their employment. They constitute a powerful

reserve in the hands of the commander either to engage hostile tanks or to support a general counterattack or counteroffensive.” (See FM 100-5, 1944, p. 182, par. 643.)

In addition to the roles of assault, shock support and penetration, and pursuit and encirclement, tank units were used for other purposes. Due to the lack of an adequate armored car or other reconnaissance vehicle during the war, medium tanks were frequently used in that role.⁵⁸ Col. General Katukov pointed out that tanks were also well suited for rear or advance guards.⁵⁹

Since the war, despite the large-scale demobilization of the infantry, armored formations have been increased, absolutely as well as relatively. From a wartime ratio of roughly ten infantry divisions to one armored division (tank or mechanized), the ratio has fallen to almost three or two to one. The proportion of mechanized divisions is increasing as infantry divisions are mechanized.

The most complete and interesting account of postwar Soviet doctrine on tank and armored troops was written (in 1945) by Marshal Rotmistrov, an outspoken tank general. (As a colonel he had advocated radical increase in independent mass use of tanks as early as 1940.) Rotmistrov repeats the usual statement of the necessity for combined arms, but he clearly gives to the tank forces at least as central a place as infantry or artillery; he ascribes to them “the decisive role in the attack.” Although he admits that “no single type of troop can defeat the enemy without assistance from other arms,” he adds: “Nevertheless, this does not mean that tanks must, in all types of operations and during all the stages of an operation, act only in close cooperation with the other types of troops and, in particular, with the infantry.”⁶⁰ Rotmistrov argues that neither artillery nor infantry (nor both together) can break through the enemy’s defenses completely. He wrote:

Artillery can annihilate, neutralize the fire system of the enemy, to a depth of six to eight kilometers, and with the use of well trained infantry this zone of resistance can be taken, but a breakthrough of the defense, nevertheless, will not take place.... Thus an offensive, undertaken without tanks, can push back the forward line of the defense to a distance of six to eight kilometers, but is unable to break through the defenses of the enemy.

.....

The experience of war has clearly shown that the mass of infantry, armed with infantry weapons, is not able in its firepower to be compared with tanks, their fire might, and ability to maneuver on the field of battle.⁶¹

Rotmistrov's account of the use of tanks in the assault is the most complete Soviet statement available. He stated:

Following a breakthrough of the defense, the tanks must go into the attack in waves, echeloned in depth. In the first two or three echelons heavy tanks and self-propelled guns attack, and in the last two or three echelons, medium tanks with mechanized infantry and motorized artillery, which consolidate and develop the successes of the first echelons. Naturally not always and not everywhere will it be necessary to have such a high concentration; in many sectors, obviously, the troops will carry out offensive operations while maintaining the previous norms of concentration of tanks in the battle units of the infantry, but where the command will attempt to obtain a decisive result, it is necessary to concentrate as many tanks as possible on the battlefield. All the experience of previous operations teaches us that where the tanks are used in mass and with regard to their battle capabilities, as a rule, greater successes were achieved and the tank forces suffered insignificant losses.⁶²

He strongly insists that tanks have become the main means of defeating the enemy in his entire depth of defense, and that "the tank, without any doubt, has solved the problem of the most complete overwhelming of the defense"; and he reiterates confidently that "it must be admitted that the present decisive force of that attack is the tank."⁶³ Finally, Rotmistrov gives five reasons for the superiority of tanks over other types of troops:

- (a) only the tank, during the attack, has the ability to advance to within a short distance from the enemy and to destroy him at close range by its fire;
- (b) only the tank can carry out an uninterrupted attack, destroying in its advance (by fire and the use of its treads) the points of resistance of the enemy which have survived the artillery preparation;
- (c) only the tank, which has cannon and machine guns, has the ability in the attack to destroy most effectively all the anti-infantry means of battle, to fight against tanks and the artillery defense;
- (d) only the tank, thanks to its armor, can aggressively go into the attack without fear of machine guns, automatic and rifle fire, and also the fire of light artillery, and has the ability to fight these defensive weapons on its own and by skillful action can emerge as the victor in this struggle;
- (e) only the tank, by having a motor and caterpillar tracks, can attack at great speed and destroy the enemy, before the latter can get ready to fight the tank.⁶⁴

Certain shortcomings and limitations of tanks are seen by other Soviet, and German, military authorities. Thus, even as late as April, 1945, the worn Sixth German *Panzer* Army succeeded in repulsing vastly superior Soviet tank forces. To the end of the war, the Soviets had difficulty in coordinating their infantry and tank advances, although Marshal Malinovsky's lightning drive across Manchuria in August, 1945 (700 miles in 5 days), showed that a basis for long-distance tank and mechanized advance existed, at least where preparation long in advance was possible.

Although recognizing Soviet armored forces as powerful combat formations, German sources usually considered them to have been far below their potentiality, for both technical and tactical reasons.⁶⁵ Soviet tank tactics tend toward stereotyped drill patterns.⁶⁶ In general, during the war training was inadequate; experienced drivers were lost too rapidly to train replacements well. Thus, the Germans reported that Soviet tank drivers would often follow the crest of hills instead of ravines because driving was easier, despite the much greater losses entailed. Driving in combat was frequently uncertain, and the tanks tended to bunch together (partly because of lack of radio communication and the need of close visual contact). Most Soviet accounts of training present, of course, a highly favorable picture;⁶⁷ but in one case Col. General Katukov admitted:

A few words about the training of tank crews coming up as replacements. Their training was often neglected in certain respects. They frequently lacked experience in driving and fire practice. This was caused during training by economy in ammunition and fuel, and the desire not to wear out training tanks. Soldiers were trained to throw dummies instead of live grenades, and the amount of gas and shells to be expended was strictly limited. The result was that no economy was made at all, as the training had to be completed at the front where one had to waste time and expend live ammunition and fuel needed for other purposes.⁶⁸

Generals of other services found certain limitations on the employment of tanks which the tankists failed to mention. Thus Major General Korkodinov, of the General Staff, declared:

... tank formations have a number of weak characteristics: (a) there are too few infantry in their composition to comb out and clean out completely the enemy in the locality and to hold it stubbornly; (&) there is too little artillery in its composition to suppress the organized defense of the foe safely; (c) they are incapable of overcoming in battle a series of natural and artificial obstacles. Therefore, tank units rarely can act without the aid of troop formations of another type and aviation.⁶⁹

Soviet armored-warfare doctrine provides for the organic inclusion in armored divisions of self-propelled artillery. As we have noted, Marshal Rotmistrov is a champion of the use of this type of artillery.⁷⁰ His ideas have been largely adopted, and self-propelled artillery is standardized in the new mechanized and tank divisions as mobile accompanying artillery. Self-propelled guns follow tanks closely (at a distance of 300 to 400 meters), giving them flank and rear protection. The Soviet mechanized division has a strong complement of heavy, self-propelled guns, the tank division has medium guns of this type, and the infantry (rifle) division has self-propelled guns of smaller caliber.

Cavalry

The early concern with maneuver, and the lack of aviation and armored forces, led to particular reliance on cavalry in the young Red Army. Frunze argued that even though the First World War with its positional fronts had served to mark an eclipse of cavalry, future war of maneuver would retain “an exceptionally important role” for it.⁷¹ Stalin has been given full credit and wide acclaim for the creation of the first Cavalry Army in history, under former Master Sergeant Budenny. The successes of Red (and White) cavalry created hopeful expectations regarding the strategic significance of this arm in the 1920’s and 1930’s. Some military men were more discreet and stressed the particular types of task especially amenable to cavalry action; thus, Shaposhnikov stated that modern deep fire and positional warfare had rendered cavalry less useful, and emphasized that it was still very important, but in new roles of flank attack and defense and in reconnaissance.⁷² While many disagreed, greatest prominence was given to cavalry in long-range reconnaissance, for which it was then considered to be more effective than aviation, which, it was said, should be used to “fill in” the framework of intelligence obtained by the cavalry.⁷³

Concern with this arm remained, and Voroshilov stated to the Seventeenth Party Congress, in 1934, that “First and foremost, it is necessary to put an end once and for all to the wrecking ‘theories on the substitution of machines for horses, on the ‘withering away’ of the horse.”⁷⁴

The 1936 and 1940 *Field Regulations* and the 1941-1942 *Cavalry Combat Regulations* laid the bases for Soviet employment of cavalry in the Soviet-German war. The characteristics of mobility, flexibility, speed, and maneuverability are stressed.⁷⁵ Cavalry is considered capable of both independent and combined operation.⁷⁶ In both cases, its value for flank and rear attack and also for harassment is well understood. Large cavalry formations are termed “strategic cavalry” and are said to be “a resource of the high command” for special raids or development of successes.⁷⁷

Soviet employment of cavalry in the Soviet-German war was outstanding in comparison with the futile charges of Polish lancers against the German *Panzers*. During the war, from 30 to 50 cavalry divisions were maintained and were frequently used in corps strength (3 divisions totaling 19,000 men, including about 8000 “sabers,” or horse-mounted cavalymen). This mass employment of cavalry was unique; indeed, only the Soviets possessed such large quantities of horse cavalry. The Germans had mechanized all but one cavalry division by June, 1941 (a fact which many German generals came to regret). Since the war, the Soviets have increased the size of the cavalry division from 4500 to 5500 men, but are not sacrificing mobility to the increased firepower.

As the regulations state, cavalry is employed both independently and in combined action. The chief missions are:

- 1) Flank and rear attacks, either independently or in combined action with an infantry or armored formation for penetration of a weak defense line,
- 2) Envelopment and encirclement,
- 3) Liquidation of an encircled enemy pocket,
- 4) Harassment in active defense,
- 5) Harassment in pursuit.

There were a number of instances in the recent war in which cavalry formations participated successfully in combined operation with other arms: at Moscow, in 1941; below Stalingrad, in 1942; at Taganrog and below Kiev, in 1943; and at Korsun-Shevchenkivskyi, Bobruisk, and toward the Vistula, in 1944.

Most outstanding, however, were the independent raids into the hostile rear, which began in 1941. Col. General Dovator, later killed in the battle for Moscow, remained for 2 weeks in the German rear in the autumn of 1941. Lt.

General Belov's cavalry corps encircled and destroyed 2 German divisions in October, 1941. In the battle for the Dnepr-Berezina triangle, a cavalry corps advanced through the Pripiat marshes in the rear of a German corps near Bobruisk and cut off all contact with and supply from its rear for 8 days. (Again in the winter of 1943-1944 the Germans in the Pripiat region were encircled by the Red cavalry.) Lt. General Belov's cavalry corps operated very successfully in the German rear in the summer of 1942. General Haider, then Chief of Staff of the German Army, noted in his diary for June 17, 1942: "Cavalry Corps Belov is now floating around in the area west of Kirov. Quite a man, that we have to send no less than seven divisions after him."⁷⁸ In one outstanding instance, an independent cavalry mission undertaken by Lt. General Sokolov's Cossack Cavalry Corps remained in the German rear for 135 days before successfully returning through the lines.⁷⁹

Cavalry is considered to be a supplement to, not a weaker substitute for, tank and mechanized forces. This arm is employed, successfully, under conditions of terrain, weather, and logistics where armored forces cannot be as well used. It is particularly well adapted to action in the muddy seasons, when tank actions are most limited. *Continued Soviet reliance upon a cavalry arm contrasts with the recent abolition of cavalry in the U.S. Army.* One feature of particular interest should be noted: the unusual degree of initiative and boldness of action permitted to the cavalry, relative to the other Soviet arms of service. Initiative is sought in all manuals; but wartime experience shows that special heed is paid to the exhortations of the *Cavalry Combat Regulations* that "Cavalry must be educated in the spirit of bold and daring solutions."⁸⁰

Engineers and Chemical Service

The Soviet Army has consigned to the regular combat arms, predominantly the infantry, and to the rear services many tasks which we are accustomed to regard as engineering duties. The Soviet infantry not only digs in, but carries much of the burden of digging emplacements for "dug in" tanks and artillery pieces, including numerous alternate positions and deceptive "dummy" positions. The endurance of the Russian soldier is fully exploited. We have

noted the infantry's role in mine clearance; it also plays the major role in camouflage, entrenchment, bridge building, and construction of roadblocks and simple emplacements, and provides the labor for other large constructions.⁸¹ Engineer units have come to be used increasingly as the trained nucleus for technical direction of large-scale constructions and special bridges, etc. Their tools and methods are frequently primitive (such as the construction of bridges of logs over rivers and swamps) but they are usually quite effective.

Another, perhaps the chief, function of the combat engineers is the handling of demolitions and laying of land mines and other explosives.⁸² The Soviets have a wide variety of mines and are adept at improvising others as well as booby-traps of all descriptions. At Kursk, in 1943, 1700 antipersonnel and 2000 antitank mines per square kilometer were laid.⁸³ At Kiev and Sevastopol, in 1941 and 1942, remote-control mines were detonated after the Germans had occupied the cities, razing entire blocks.⁸⁴ Engineers also handled flame throwers (one battalion to each infantry corps).

Many tasks performed by engineers in Western armies are not mentioned above. These include road and railroad construction, repair, and maintenance and are performed by rear service troops in the Soviet Army. Engineers were used up to brigade strength during the war, but usually by small battalions. Each infantry division has one engineer battalion of 164 men. Their general role increased greatly during the Soviet-German war, and in 1946 Major General Sysoev of the Engineers declared that this increase in importance was so significant that they had emerged as "a new type of combat arm."⁸⁵

The chemical-warfare troops (BKhV) handle "poisonous substances" and smoke and incendiary materials; possibly, in the future, they will handle bacteriological weapons. Such weapons have the advantage that they can be employed covertly as well as overtly and are adaptable to subversive use. Vociferous accusations that the United States is planning and conducting bacteriological-warfare research and has used germs in North Korea may be an indication of the fact that the USSR itself is preparing for bacteriological warfare.

CHAPTER 20

SOVIET EMPLOYMENT OF AIRPOWER

The postwar period has witnessed two developments of particular importance to the Soviet doctrine of airpower. The strategic situation of the chief enemy center of power effectively beyond the reach of the Soviet ground-air combined team is unprecedented in Soviet experience, and it dictates a re-examination of their World War II doctrine with its emphasis on the tactical air support of ground forces. In addition, the technological-arms revolution of the postwar years has made itself felt with particular effect in the development of airpower capabilities, i.e., in the development of jet propulsion and in the increased role of aviation, as the chief delivery agent for the atomic bomb. Available evidence, including the demonstration of an excellent Soviet jet fighter in Korea and the unveiling of numerous other modern Soviet aircraft in the annual Moscow air shows, bears witness to Soviet accomplishments in technical development and production. Modifications in doctrine and techniques for the employment of airpower on the basis of these changes can be expected, but can only be speculated on at this time. In the absence of direct information on current Soviet development of their air doctrine, it is necessary to rely chiefly on Soviet experience and doctrine in World War II. Despite the limitations which this imposes, the Soviet doctrine of the recent war remains, of course, the basic framework into which current modifications are introduced, and hence its examination should yield useful insight into the Soviet approach to the employment of airpower.

Soviet airpower is currently divided among six component air forces, corresponding to particular missions. They are:

- 1) The army air force of the Soviet Army [*Voennye Vozdushnye Sily Sovetskoi Armii* VVS-SA];
- 2) The naval air force [*VS Voenno-Morskogo Flota*; WSVMF];
- 3) The long-range (strategic) bomber force [*Aviatsiia Dalnego Deistviia*; ADD];
- 4) The interceptor fighter force of the air defense force [*Istrebitel'naia Aviatsiia Protivo-Vozdushnoi Oborony*; IA-PVO];
- 5) The airborne troops [*Vozdushno-Desantnye Voiska*; VDV];
- 6) The civil air fleet [*Grazhdanskii Vozdushnyi Flot*; GVF].*

In addition, there is a small air force under the Chief Administration of the Northern Sea Route and a small force under the MVD (formerly part of the MGB), and there are the training planes of DOSAAF (the preliminary voluntary youth organization) and small artillery spotter and liaison aircraft.

* For the relation of each of these forces to the over-all military establishment and for the internal organization of the WS-SA (hereinafter referred to simply as the VVS), see Appendix I, "The Organization of the Soviet Armed Forces," pp. 441ff.

The fighter, attack, and bomber arms of the army air force (VVS), the long-range bombing force (ADD), the airborne forces (VDV), and the air defense force (PVO) will be examined in this chapter. The naval air force is discussed in the following chapter on sea power and amphibious warfare. The civil air fleet will not be discussed as such; its planes are assigned in wartime to the VDV and ADD for their needs.

A general feature of the Soviet air forces is a strong tendency to stress maintenance of formations. In part, this is a military necessity for all air forces; in part, it is emphasized because Soviet flyers are not conspicuously successful in maintaining formation flight; but, in addition, it is probably a product of the general Soviet denial of initiative at all levels except the highest.

The official textbook for air force cadets, *Aviation Tactics*, stated that "Preservation of compact formation is the fundamental obligation of the flyer of a multiplace aircraft in formation flight."¹ Lt. General of Aviation B. Ushakov said, in outlining the training tasks for 1947, that "The most important element of combat preparation of flying personnel in 1947 is combat formation flights...."² In 1949 Colonel Kravchenko indicated the importance of combat formation:

All group flights of fighters are conducted in combat formations and systems. A combat formation is a grouping created for conducting aerial battle or dealing a blow from the air to a ground target. Naturally, in each grouping of fighters, groups or echelons of aircraft can be created, designated to fulfill

certain different tasks in the air.

Each group (or echelon) of aircraft forming a combat fighter formation, fulfills the flight in a system, that is it takes definite distances and intervals between aircraft, which are provided for by regulations and manuals or by commanders before the flight of fighters on the mission.³

The strong Soviet reliance on the air flight commanders is indicated in a passage of apology for Soviet backwardness in instrumentation, in which Colonel Berezin remarked that there was no need for “most young combat pilots” to be “distracted” by too many instruments, since “each unit is led by an experienced commander.”⁴ The leading Soviet fighter ace, Colonel Pokryshkin, indirectly indicates this strong Soviet concern with unit command by his statements regarding the importance of disrupting the enemy’s command: “The important thing is by an impetuous attack to clear the combat formation of the whole group, to annihilate the flagship, to deny the group direction, to create panic and confusion among its crews, and then to destroy each plane one by one.”⁵ This passage also demonstrates the Soviet application in aerial combat of the doctrinal aim of annihilation of the enemy in detail.

Other manuals, the statements of former Soviet air force officers, and other sources all confirm this strong Soviet stress on maintaining patterned formation in aerial combat. Take-off and landing discipline, specific speeds and altitudes, all are instilled in air force training in order to fashion the air (as well as other) arms of the combined armed forces into an instrument for fulfilling the plan of the High Command. Colonel Kravchenko wrote that Pokryshkin’s development of the use of the pair (basic fighter unit) caused it to become “even more monolithic.”⁶

The lack of initiative in combat formation, which is at least in part a necessity shared by all air forces, was sometimes so pronounced as to give the enemy the opportunity of predicting maneuvers and thus of destroying the aircraft. Colonel Fedorov admitted this in a postwar discussion of attack aviation tactics. He noted that “German anti-aircraft men learned well the actions of our attack planes.... This maneuver quickly gave the enemy the opportunity to understand from what turn or maneuver our attack planes would attack....”⁷

Tactical organization is discussed in the sections dealing with each arm of aviation. The basic administrative units for fighter and attack aviation are the *zveno* (“flight,” of 4 aircraft), the *eskadril’ia* (“squadron,” of 12 aircraft), and the *polk* (“regiment,” of 42 aircraft). For bomber or reconnaissance aircraft, the *zveno* consists of 3 aircraft; the *eskadril’ia*, of 9 aircraft; and the *polk*, of 32 aircraft. Above the regiment is the air division [*diviziia*], of 3 or 4 air regiments (100 to 150 aircraft); the air corps [*korpus*], of 3 or 4 air divisions (350 to 500 aircraft); and finally the air army [*vozdushnaia armiia*] (roughly 1000 to 1400 aircraft). The size of the air corps or air army varied greatly, depending on the activeness of the sector of the front, the quantity of aircraft available, and other factors.⁸

The basic tactical (combat) unit for fighter and attack aviation is not the *zveno** however, but the *para** (“pair,” 2 aircraft) and the *gruppa** (usually *iy2* or 2 *zveno*’s, 6 or 8 aircraft).

* The Soviet terms *para*, *zveno*, and *gruppa*, and the terms air squadron, regiment, division, corps, and army will be used in our discussion for convenience and clarity, rather than only approximate USAF equivalents.

All units of organization through and including the air division, and sometimes the air corps, are composed of only one air arm (except that attack divisions sometimes include escort fighter squadrons). The air armies are “balanced,” including fighter, attack, bomber, and reconnaissance formations.

The Army Air Force (WS-SA)

The basic mission of the VVS, which comprises about two-thirds of the Soviet air strength, is tactical support of the ground forces by light and attack bombing, fighter, and reconnaissance aviation. Prior to the Soviet-German war, its forces were divided into “troop aviation” and “combat aviation”; this distinction has been abolished.⁹

Soviet air doctrine has stressed the supporting role of airpower. Thus, Major General of Aviation A. Zaitzev wrote, since the recent war: “It is necessary to remember that combined action is organized in the interests of the infantry troops, which, as is well known, fulfill the main role in battle.”¹⁰ This theme of the necessity for air support to the ground forces is constantly reiterated in the Soviet military press. To cite but one other typical statement, in 1948 Col. General Sudets, Chief of Staff of the VVS, wrote:

... in Stalinist military theory it is considered that victory in contemporary war is attained only by the combined efforts of all types of forces, and therefore the training of air force units is planned so that they can first of all provide *direct assistance to the ground forces in all types of operations*. The development of all branches of the Soviet air forces is carried out in accordance with this fundamental principle. The course of the war confirmed the soundness of this policy regarding problems of development and deployment of the air forces.¹¹

The basic specific missions of the VVS in implementing this fundamental principle of direct assistance to the ground forces are:

- (a) establishment of aerial superiority by destruction of hostile aviation in the air and on the ground;
- (b) attack and destruction of enemy troops and materiel on the field of battle;
- (c) attack and neutralization of enemy reserves of men and materiel;
- (d) interdiction of supply from the rear to the enemy forces on the field of battle;
- (e) combined action with the ground forces during an assault and breakthrough;
- (f) combined action with the ground forces in the advance and in pursuit;
- (g) cover for the (usually concealed) movement and concentration of friendly forces;
- (h) participation in the annihilation of encircled enemy forces;
- (i) reconnaissance;
- (j) participation in the supply of partisans in the enemy's rear.¹²

Thus, the Soviet conception emphasizes, in the words of Colonel Denisov, that "Air superiority is not an end in itself, but is for the benefit of the ground troops."¹³ This auxiliary role for airpower—support of the ground forces—is reflected in the organizational subordination of the VVS to the Ministry of War and, in the field, to the army Fronts.*

* In contrast "with the Soviet subordination of the air force to ground force control, United States doctrine was stated as follows in the 1943 *Field Service Regulations*: "Land power and air power are coequal and interdependent forces; neither is an auxiliary of the other." (See FM 100-20, *Command and Employment of Air Power*, U.S. War Department, July 21, 1943-) These *Regulations* also state that the first priority of tactical airpower is to gain aerial superiority (p. 10, par. 16).

Since 1942, concentrated combined action of the VVS and ground forces has been termed "the air offensive," a concept (similar to "the artillery offensive") which stresses continuous aerial support to ground forces from advance preparatory fire through all stages of the offensive, including pursuit.¹⁴ The Soviets, at least in World War II, directed much of their airpower to close support of ground forces on the field of battle, where it became "long-range artillery." Thus, the 1942 *Theses on Offensive Combat* treated air and artillery destructiveness as comparable; a 122-mm howitzer division was said to be capable of delivering 18 tons of explosives in a few minutes, whereas 18 aircraft each with 1 ton of bombs would be required to equal this.¹⁵ The same manual stated: "The entire experience of the Fatherland War demonstrates that aviation in offensive operations, when the defense is firmly and deeply dug in, cannot by the force of material action replace artillery, although when the troops are insufficiently trained or have 'air fear' it can exert great morale effect, and temporarily crush and neutralize combat capability."¹⁶

The integration of airpower and ground action to achieve the desired direct assistance of the former to the ground forces has been sought through various systems of subordination of air formations to ground command, but at a very high level. At the beginning of the war, air formations were subordinate to local ground command at a relatively low level; in September, 1941, dissatisfaction with the results of this system led to a change, and Air Armies were allocated, with their own internal command channels, to support Fronts. In this connection, Colonel Khariton observed that "The basic principle of using aviation in combined action is the support of land troops. This principle permits the centralization in the hands of the command of the higher air formations all aviation, with the aim of its most rational utilization in the interests of the troops."¹⁷ As a rule, during the war one Air Army served each Front (Army Group). Sometimes units from one Air Army were for a limited time subordinated to another Air Army, if the latter's Front was fulfilling the primary mission at that given time (i.e., was delivering the main blow). The Front and Air Army commanders together worked out the operational plan. The Front commander determined the priority of missions and, with the advice of the Air Army commander, decided upon the general missions of the air forces to support the ground operation. The Front commander thus signified how he wished the air forces to be employed, by stages of the battle, indicating in which direction the main forces were to be concentrated. On the basis of this decision taken by the Front commander, the Air Army commander worked out a plan for the utilization of his aviation, by phases, determining which formations (units) would perform each mission on the basis of the permitted expenditure of resources (in terms of aircraft sorties).¹⁸ The Air Army commander translated the Front commander's general orders into the following six missions:

- 1) Reconnaissance—relation to the main blow, relation to timing;
- 2) Cover for concentration of troops (especially of tank units);
- 3) The aviation missions prior to the offensive (attacks on communications, on the region of troop concentration, on hostile airfields, etc.);
- 4) Tasks immediately preceding the assault (attacks on the enemy defense line);

- 5) Tasks in the period of the breakthrough (direct support of ground formations);
- 6) Tasks in connection with the operations of ground formations in operational depth (support or assignment of air units to ground formations).¹⁹

On the basis of these instructions, the Air Army staff prepared the detailed plan for the employment of the air forces, designating which units, where and when, would fulfill each mission. This plan was confirmed by the Front commander in accordance with the general plan of the operation. This was necessary, since the situation could swiftly change and it was sometimes necessary to make corrections in the original plan in the course of the operation. However, the design of the general plan, as a rule, was not changed so long as a general change of the entire situation on the Front did not dictate such a move. Thus, in the preparatory period of the operation, all units acted according to the plan of the Air Army. In the period of the breakthrough, during combat operations in depth of the hostile defense and in pursuit, air units acted according to the principle of support to definite ground formations.²⁰

In the periods of preparation and of close support during the assault and breakthrough, all air forces acted in very strict accordance with the plan of the Air Army. The action of aviation during these periods was centralized. When the air force formations (units) turned to support of specific ground formations, especially in pursuit, the air-formation commander coordinated the activities of his units with those of the commander of the supported ground formation.²¹

Considerable emphasis is placed on careful and detailed planning and preparation. According to Lt. General Savitsky, the tactical operations plan for an aviation unit in support of a tank formation included:

- 1) the time of the commencement of the operation by the tank units;
- 2) the arrival times of the tank units at indicated phase lines;
- 3) the axis of the armored advance;
- 4) the means of communication (between tanks and aircraft); and
- 5) the specific air missions in each stage of the operation.²²

On the basis of such a plan, it was customary for the air- and ground-formation staffs jointly to work out the details for combined action, the air staff elaborating the assignment and deployment of the air units.²³ The table on page 330 is a simplified sample Plan for Combined Action of an attack aviation formation and tank formation, prepared for the author by a former high-ranking Soviet officer.²⁴ This planning table, and the combat reports following each combat sortie (presented to the Air Army command), was intended to permit the Air Army Command to control the operations of subordinate air units and, when necessary, to make corrections. The commander of an air formation daily and constantly in the course of battle coordinated air combat actions concretely, by location and time, with the ground troops within the confines of his established limit of aircraft sorties.²⁵

For example, the official Soviet air force journal carried an account of one specific operation in detail, the cooperation between attack aircraft and tanks in the Orsha-Vitebsk operation of the Third Belorussian Front in June, 1944.²⁶ First, in the planning stage, at the division level, "The commanders and staffs of the attack aviation unit and tank formation jointly worked out all the documents on the organization of tactical combined action."

"The mission of the attack aviation consisted in accompanying the infantry and tanks, in creating a suitable curtain of fire in front of and on the flanks of the advancing tank formation." In the direction of the operation itself, "The commander of the air group, the commander of the attack aviation formation, and the commander of the tank formation which was supposed to enter the breach, were at the command post of the commander of the Army." Radio communications from ground and air units were received and action coordinated from this command post. This was all directed on the basis of the previously-worked-out plan. Groups of attack planes were always in readiness at nearby airfields for immediate answer to calls. Mutual identification of tank and aviation units was attained by rocket signals from the forward tanks and by reference points indicated by precision shrapnel bursts.²⁷

Plan for Combined Action of Attack Aviation Formation with Tank Formation in the Period of Battle from to

| Time | Phases and limits of combat operations | Tank operations | Aviation Missions |
|------|--|-----------------|-------------------|
|------|--|-----------------|-------------------|

| Attack Time | Phases and Number of aircraft operations | Time of arrival of tank operations | Signal for the tanks to cross the phase line | Fighter cover | Attack aircraft in reconnaissance | |
|------------------|--|---|--|---------------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| H+3.00 H+4.00 | Entrance of tank formation | Operations in designated directions | Suppression and destruction of the artillery batteries and materiel of the enemy | 40 | 30m | 227 |
| Attack units | Number of aircraft on phase line | Time of arrival from phase line of the target | Targets, _____ | Fighter cover | Attack aircraft in reconnaissance | |
| | | | Signal for the tanks to cross the phase line | | | |

NOTE: 1) Detailed missions (targets) are assigned daily by the corps command.

2) For subsequent days the plan and missions are of a more general nature and ; course of combat operations.

The same general scheme governed cooperation with the infantry and artillery. Thus,

In all cases the artillery must know the time, place and altitude at which friendly aviation will cross the front line, and also the signals for designating targets and for shifting or ceasing fire. When artillery and aviation are to attack the same target, it is necessary to establish beforehand the order of the attack, and both must operate upon a unified plan. The altitude of the flight of the aircraft must be definitely prescribed in orders in accordance with the height of the trajectory of the artillery projectiles.²⁸

Rocket (pyrotechnic) signals were mentioned in the illustrative case of air-tank combined action; sometimes colored smoke or colored balloons were used. Only the lead element of the lead platoon was permitted to signal (unless an artificial reference-point system was used).²⁹

The High Command of the VVS (on orders from the *Stavka*) could at any time interfere in the ordinary chain of command if the situation so required and order specific targets to be attacked to effect specific results; e.g., destruction of a certain rail center or airfield might be ordered, even though the target might be outside the limits of the ground forces of the given Front. Similarly, the Air Army commander could concern himself directly with the operations of a subordinate air formation if the situation demanded. All commanders concerned were immediately notified of such changes.³⁰

Close support of the ground forces was organized on either of two principles: *support* [*podderzhka*] or *assignment* [*pridach*]. *Support* is the basic and ordinary form of the employment of tactical aviation and is based on centralized command and direction to permit the utilization of aviation against the most important targets at the most important moment. *Assignment* connotes the subordination of air units to the commander of a specific ground formation, limited to particular units at particular stages of an operation. This principle was employed to strengthen combined troop units (formations), especially those acting on a flank or in operational depth, i.e., separated from the main mass of troops. This most frequently involved tank and mechanized troops. In this case the commander of the air unit received his missions from the commander of the ground unit he was assigned to support, locating himself at (or in proximity to) the command post or observation post of the ground commander. This form of close support was used rarely, and only when a large Air Army was available to the Front.³¹

If the commander of a subordinate air unit or of an Air Army was operating according to the principle of "assignment," he was relatively free in the selection of targets, subject to the requirements of the ground force unit commander. When operating on the principle of "support," he was more limited to the fulfillment of missions assigned by the commander of the Air Army. In other cases, the commander of an air formation and the commander of the ground formation which he was supporting themselves determined which targets were to be attacked. In practice, the Air Army commander often changed or augmented the missions, if the circumstances on the Front so demanded. The commander of a squadron was always given definite targets to attack and, also, an alternative objective.

An air regiment, division, or corps, acting according to the general plan of the Air Army, was always given clearly defined targets in a definite region. Nevertheless, rational initiative was encouraged. If the commander of a group [*gruppa*] should see a new (nonstationary) target which, in his opinion, was more important at the given moment, he might direct his group to the new target, immediately informing his senior commander. In an attack on a stationary target, the commander of a group was not permitted to change the objective of attack. In extreme cases he might attack the alternative target: for instance, if the airfield he was ordered to attack was not occupied by aircraft, or if weather conditions did not permit an attack on so narrow a target as a bridge or railroad intersection.³² In case

of a sharp change in the situation, all commanders, from the commander of a squadron upward, could direct their air units to new targets, immediately informing their senior commanders. This was true even of air units in close combat support of ground formations. However, as in general in the Soviet armed forces, the use of such initiative was fraught with danger to the commander responsible, particularly if the result was unsuccessful; exercise of initiative was thus infrequent and was sometimes lacking in situations demanding such action.

Coordination at intermediate and subordinate levels was achieved by liaison officers of the Air Army assigned to the corresponding ground force. Hence, "Constant active liaison between 'the air' and 'the ground' is law, and each case of broken liaison must be considered an exceptional incident."³³ The 1943 *Instructions on the Organization of Communications in Aviation Formations and Units* stated the regulations on air-ground liaison as follows:

Experience has shown that during aerial combat the best results in directing fighter planes are achieved when aircraft are under the direct command of the officers of their units, acting from ground observation points.

The deputy commanders and chiefs of staff remain on the airfields and prepare successive groups for flight....

It is necessary to bear in mind that when air combat is in progress too much interference from the ground may result in loss of initiative and the sense of responsibility on the part of the commanding officers in the air.³⁴

Liaison officers served four functions:

- 1) informing air units of tactical changes in air and ground situation;
- 2) transmitting requests for support from the ground force commanders;
- 3) advising the ground force commanders on aviation matters;
- 4) making necessary changes in air force missions while the air units are in flight (i.e., informing air units in flight of new targets of greater importance, or changing the objective to previously arranged alternate targets).³⁵

Radio communication was maintained between air force commanders and liaison officers on the ground and squadron leaders in flight.³⁶ In important operations, the Air Army commander or his deputy was located at or near the ground force advance command post for direct liaison with the Front or Army commander.

Soviet doctrine has not distinguished as clearly as has American air doctrine the difference between the missions of "interdiction" and "close support," both missions being subsumed under the overall mission of "support of the ground forces." In practice, both tasks are concretely considered. The determination of the distribution of air effort between interdiction and battlefield close support of ground troops has depended in practice largely on the stage of an operation. In the period of preparation for an offensive operation (and sometimes also for a defensive operation, as in the defense of Moscow, or in the first days of the Kursk-Orel operation), all tactical aviation (bomber, attack, and even the major part of fighter aviation) was employed against targets such as operational reserves of the enemy, supply routes and stores (especially fuel), command posts, and air bases. These operations were planned by the Air Army staff or, if they were operating in combined action of several Fronts, according to the plan of the High Command. In the period of the attack and development of success, bomber aviation continued to fulfill its task of isolating the region of combat action from enemy reserves and supply, simultaneously continuing to suppress hostile aviation on its airfields. Fighter aviation continued to cover friendly forces from hostile attack and sought to deny the air to the enemy. These actions were all conducted according to the Air Army plan. From the moment of transition of air units to direct support of ground formations, attack and dive-bomber air units coordinated with the ground troops, fulfilling at the same time the missions of isolating the region of combat action by means of fire interdiction, in case of an enemy counterattack, and acting against hostile advancing columns of troops, transport, and the like.³⁷

Thus, the fulfillment of both tasks (interdiction and close support) was closely tied by time and place, and isolation of the region of combat actions continued *constantly* throughout the entire course of the operation, fulfilling simultaneously both the decision of the commander of the air unit in the immediate region of combat action and the general plan of the Air Army. In determining the proportion of air units assigned to each of these missions, the main consideration was the stage of the operation. In one period (especially that of preparation), the major part of all available airpower might be thrown into isolating the region of combat action; in another period (particularly that of the assault), the mass of aviation might be transferred to immediate support of ground troops on the field of battle.³⁸ The advent of jet light bombers may well herald an increase in relative emphasis toward the interdiction mission.

Insufficient data are available for evaluation of the effectiveness of Soviet airpower in support of the ground forces. In concrete terms, Col. General Katukov, of the Tank Troops, indicated that "when cooperation and communications were well organized," specifically requested air support was obtained in 30 minutes.³⁹ Lt. General Sir Noel MacFarlane, as head of the British military mission, observed Soviet forces in combat, and stated that in his experience specific requests for air support were usually met in less than an hour.⁴⁰

Former Soviet air force officers interviewed by this author have given mixed and conflicting reports on the effectiveness of air-ground coordination.⁴¹ In general, there appears to have been considerable ground force resentment over lack of air cover and support in the first half of the war, but less during the last two years of it, when a considerable Soviet quantitative aviation superiority prevailed. One Soviet reporter even admitted the aberration of air support's accidentally striking the supported ground troops. He wrote of an incident in which

"Ai-ir-craft!" came the long-drawn-out shout of the Lieutenant marching at the head of the column. Two planes were darting over the oak grove in the direction of the road. The men followed their flight apprehensively, exchanging comments:

"They're ours!"

"No, they're German!"

And the usual frontline joke was cracked:

"They're ours all right—where's my helmet!"⁴²

Again, there is not adequate material with which to determine whether such incidents, common to all the belligerents of the recent war, were more or less frequent in Soviet operations.

Fighter Aviation of the WS

Fighter aviation in the VVS is assigned the following main missions:

- 1) To gain air superiority and secure freedom of ground action;
- 2) To escort and protect attack and light-bomber aircraft;
- 3) To provide cover for ground actions;
- 4) To conduct continuous tactical and operational reconnaissance;
- 5) To carry on patrolling;
- 6) To assist in direct attack on hostile ground troops, especially in pursuit.

Interception of hostile bomber attacks on the USSR is not a standard mission of the fighter arm of the VVS, but of the autonomous PVO (Anti-Air Defense Command). Tactical fighters of the WS can be expected to share the mission of air defense in their areas.

The 1940 *Combat Regulations of Fighter Aviation of the Red Army* (BUA-40) set forth prewar Soviet doctrine. These regulations formally remained basic throughout the war, although significant tactical alterations, which we shall note, were made. They stated:

Fighter aviation is the main means of struggle with the air [power] of the enemy, and has as its fundamental mission annihilating it in the air and on the ground.

Fighter aviation fulfills its tasks only by means of decisive, active operations directed toward the complete annihilation of the enemy air [power] suppressing its morale forces and ability to resist.⁴³

These regulations stress the principles of the concentration and economy of force and surprise as being "the basic principles of the use of fighter aviation." Five elements of tactics are articulated: horizontal speed, rate of climb, maneuverability, altitude, and range of flight.⁴⁴ During the war, the Soviet ace Colonel Pokryshkin created a formula which has since, in the words of another Soviet air force officer, "entered the arsenal of Soviet tactics on aerial combat."⁴⁵ Pokryshkin said: "This formula comprises the four main elements [of aerial combat]: *altitude, speed, maneuver, and fire*"⁴⁶

Prior to the war, the basic tactical combat unit, as well as administrative unit, was the *zveno*, or flight of 4 aircraft.⁴⁷ By 1942, the *para*, or pair of 2 fighters, and the *gruppa*, of 6 or 8 aircraft, became the standard tactical combat units. The *zveno* was changed in 1940 from 3 to 4 aircraft, but it remained the basic administrative unit, now composed of 2 *para*'s.⁴⁸ The purpose of the *para* is mutual cover, one airplane usually flying to the upper rear on one side. As Pokryshkin put it: "The *para* is a firing unity, in which each flyer deals a blow to the enemy and at the same time by his fire defends his co-flyer [*napamik*]"⁴⁹ According to Soviet claims, German and American *para*'s broke up under stress because each pilot was concerned only for himself, in contrast with "the self-sacrificing brotherhood of Soviet flyers."⁵⁰

Fighter escorts are provided both for attack [*shturmovik*] and medium (light) bombers. Early in the war, fighter escort was frequently lacking; later, a ratio of slightly under one to one was usual. For support of attack planes, the

usual ratios were as follows: 4 to 6 attack or light-bomber aircraft escorted by 10 to 12 fighters, and 16 to 24 attack or light-bomber aircraft escorted by 20 fighters.⁵¹

Each air regiment was usually maintained in four *gruppya*'s in graduated "states of readiness" in rotation. In wartime, one *gruppya* was usually in flight, and another was always maintained on the field with pilots in their planes. Fighter airfields were usually situated from 5 to 30 miles to the rear of the front line, and they were advanced as soon after a ground force advance as was feasible. Frequently a fighter regiment was based on the same field as an attack regiment, to serve as escort. Fighters were assigned sectors of the front, at frequent intervals, to cover and patrol.

During the war much publicity was given to the few instances of the ramming of enemy planes as a conscious offensive tactic. In some cases this was a suicidal act or was due to lack of ammunition, but in other cases flyers cultivated a technique of ramming which would, when successful, permit this to be accomplished without serious damage to their own machines. Information on the tactical use of this expedient is not sufficient for discussion of future possibilities.

In Soviet fighter tactics, as in actions by other arms, there has been evident a tendency both to stereotyped action and, because of a realization of this tendency, at least a verbal attempt to escape it. Colonel Pokryshkin, a flyer of great skill and initiative credited with being an innovator in tactics, thus defended Soviet fighter tactics from the charge of being stereotyped (a charge raised by no one, unless perhaps by his own recognition of the existence of some basis for such a charge):

But aerial combat does not suffer from stereotype standards. In our own experience we know how dangerous it is to use in battle one and the same memorized [tactical] method. The authentic value of a fighter-pilot consists especially in the fact that at the necessary moment he is able to adopt not only the one or two hundred memorized forms of fighting, which are fine in certain circumstances, but on the spur of the moment to create a new one or two hundred forms arising from the sharp moment of skirmish with the enemy. That is why one must not, of course, remain only in one vertical maneuver, in combat only by single pairs....⁵²

Pokryshkin, in describing Soviet fighter tactics, also bears witness to the strong demands for closely patterned combat-formation flight. While not strictly contradicting the claims of nonstereotyped action made above, these demands do modify their scope. He wrote:

Group combat in the air demanded freedom of maneuver for each pilot. Together with this it demanded definite close compactness of the group, which gave the opportunity to the commander to direct the actions of the flyers, to aim their blows. Close formation gave way to great distance and interval. Reliable radio communication changed the role of the group commander's aircraft, from which he formerly gave signals. Formerly, many flyers considered that the most important thing in group flight in the air was to hold as close together as possible. New combat formations set other demands before the fighter-pilot. As if width of the front, distention in depth, and echelon in altitude were not the combat formation of fighters, each flyer during the entire flight has to occupy exactly that place in it which the commander determined.

The outcome of the battle, and even the personal fate of the pilot, often depended on the habit of the flyer strictly to hold his place in these three dimensions.⁵³

Great flexibility characterized the tactics of the small groups, especially the *para*, at least on the part of the more skilled pilots, but formation flying continued to remain difficult; and the dilemma of the necessity for both formation discipline and individual initiative was never satisfactorily resolved, with the result that both remained imperfect.

Tactical reconnaissance is primarily a mission of VVS fighter units.⁵⁴ During the recent war, free-lance patrolling was widely conducted. It was termed the "free hunt" [*svobodnaia okhota*], and these fighter "hunters" [*okhotniki*], usually in a *para*, flew a very large share of the total number of sorties flown.⁵⁵

Fighter bombing was not highly developed because of the important role of attack (close-support light-bomber) aviation in this mission and because of the types of fighter aircraft available.

Fighter aviation gained considerably more importance during and since the war than before it.⁵⁶ Soviet fighter aviation is said to have flown 50 per cent of all combat sorties at Stalingrad, 60 per cent in the Kuban, 60 to 65 per cent at Kursk-Orel in 1943, and an average of 55 to 60 per cent in 1944-1945.⁵⁷

The appearance in large numbers of the MiG-15 interceptor, and in smaller numbers of several other advanced jet fighters, indicates the successful Soviet effort in the postwar period to develop modern fighter aircraft and produce them in quantity.

Attack Aviation of the WS

Soviet air doctrine has stressed the role of attack or assault aviation [*shturmovaia aviatsiia*]. Attack aircraft are termed *shturmoviki* (“stormoviks”). Attack aviation has been called “air infantry,” and the *shturmovik* was often called “the flying tank” because of its heavy armor. Both terms are applicable. Attack aviation has the mission of providing close tactical support to the ground infantry and armored troops.

Attack aviation flew about one-fourth of all missions flown and probably suffered (proportionally) the greatest losses. Its bases were usually located from 10 to 60 miles to the rear of the front. Frequently a regiment (or squadron) of attack planes was quartered on the same field as a fighter-escort regiment (or squadron).

The specific missions of attack aviation, as drawn from the 1942 and 1944 editions of the *Manual for the Combat Action of Attack Aviation* and from other manuals and recent articles,⁵⁸ are:

- 1) the direct support of ground troops in battle and operations;
- 2) destruction of hostile ground forces, men, and materiel, especially tanks and artillery;
- 3) railroads and roads;
- 4) airdromes and aircraft on them;
- 5) depots, staffs, communication centers, reserves;
- 6) interdicting enemy troop movements;
- 7) pursuing the enemy in withdrawal;
- 8) reconnaissance;
- 9) assisting in the liquidation of encircled hostile forces.

The most frequent combat attack flight was a *gruppa* of 6 or 8 aircraft;⁵⁹ for reconnaissance and “free hunting,” missions shared with fighter aviation, a *para* was usually employed.

The basic formations reflected the two basic types of attack: “concentrated” or “echeloned” blows.⁶⁰ Of these, echeloned blows were the more frequent, as they allowed greater flexibility in adopting combat maneuvers and permitted more continuous attacks to be made on the enemy.⁶¹ The circumstances of the ground battle generally determined the type of blow; when artillery was adequate alone to effect the breakthrough (as at Jassy in 1944), attack aviation was used in echeloned blows. When it was necessary to use attack aviation as “long-range artillery,” concentrated blows were struck (as at Forst in April, 1945). Sometimes (as in East Prussia in January, 1945) concentrated blows were struck even in pursuit and interdiction because adverse weather conditions demanded close formations.⁶² Low-level approach to the target was sought.

For direct tactical combined action with ground forces, the 1944 *Manual for the Combat Action of Attack Aviation* provided:

Coordination of attack aviation with ground forces, mainly with artillery and tanks, consists in the allotment of tasks between them, by plan, time, and objective, also in agreed actions in smashing the enemy.

For implementing combined actions of aviation with ground troops on the field of battle, the aviation units may *support* the ground troops, or temporarily *attach* themselves or be attached to them in operating subordination.⁶³

In our discussion of tactical air support to the ground forces, the close cooperation of attack planes with tanks in the Orsha-Vitebsk operation in June, 1944, was reviewed in detail. In most cases of cooperation with tanks, as at Vitebsk (and at Polotsk in July, 1944), the attack aviation remained independent but in close support. In some cases, however, including those of Libau and Memel, attack aviation units were attached subordinately to the corresponding tank units. Such attack units were usually 1 *zveno* of 4 aircraft or a *gruppa* of 6 aircraft.⁶⁴

Attack aviation support was expected at all stages of a land offensive as a major part of the “air offensive,” continuing in pursuit.⁶⁵ In some cases this arm was assigned to aid mobile formations in open-country movement, as in the close support given to the mechanized cavalry formations in the Bobruisk and Parchev-Sedletsy operations.⁶⁶ In cases of support action independent of ground units, attack aviation *gruppa*’s were vectored by ground-control radio. Although all aircraft had radios, only the leader of the unit was usually permitted to speak with the ground units.

Attack aviation has in the past been separate from the fighter and light-bomber branches of the WS. This may be in the process of being changed. The heavier armament and armor of the current Soviet jet fighters probably marks a transition toward a fighter-bomber fulfilling many functions previously assigned to attack aircraft. This jet fighter-bomber could carry out reconnaissance, patrolling, and strafing functions without a fighter escort. Similarly, other functions may be transferred to improved light jet bombers.

Bombing Aviation of the WS

Bombardment aviation of the Soviet army air force had both dive-bombing and level-bombing functions in World War II, utilizing twin-engine light-bomber aircraft. The 1940 *Combat Regulations for Bombardment Aviation* stated the role of this air arm as follows:

... bombardment aviation independently or in combined action with other forms of aviation defeats and annihilates the manpower combat and technological means, important objectives, and armament on the field of battle, in the troop operating-rear and depth of the rear of the enemy, operating both in day and night.

Close range bombing aviation has the special assignment of immediate tactical combined action with land troops *on the field of battle*, and action in the troop and operating rear of the enemy in the interests of battle and the operations of ground troops.⁶⁷

The employment of “close-range” bombing aviation was sometimes even carried so far as assigning to it, as well as to attack aviation, the mission of “*strengthening the action of artillery* on the most important objectives of the defense zone of the enemy.”⁶⁸

The primary mission of the WS bomber arm is interdiction of the field of battle. It also shares with attack aviation the mission of neutralizing enemy aviation on its air bases as their joint role in securing command of the air.⁶⁹

There was a tendency before the war to extend the role of light-medium bombers to night attacks, but preparation was totally inadequate. The 1940 *Combat Regulations* did provide that “Night actions are the usual form of combat action of bombing aviation.”⁷⁰ We have seen from testimony such as that of former Major General Markoff and from the record of the war that this was indeed not the case.⁷¹ Light-medium bombers rarely attacked at night during the Soviet-German war.

According to the 1942 *Manual on the Combat Actions of Bombardment Aviation*, blows by bombers, as well as by attack aviation, were “concentrated” or “echeloned.”⁷² Close bomber formations were supposed to be maintained for defensive reasons and for a more concentrated blow on the target. In the Soviet view, antiaircraft artillery could direct fewer shells against a compact group than against a number of smaller groups, the latter being exposed to “destruction in detail.”⁷³ Also, as the 1942 bomber *Manual* stated, “The system of fire in a group flight is built on the principle of defending your neighbor,”⁷⁴ thus requiring close formation. It also warned that “A group breaking its combat formation, as a rule suffers greater losses.”⁷⁵

Bomber aviation of the WS, as well as fighter and attack aviation, was controlled to a considerable extent from the ground. Colonel Chuchev stated: “We may state without hesitation that ... we learned to control bombers from the ground as well as in the air.”⁷⁶ According to this same source, regimental commanders, political deputies, chiefs of staff, and regimental navigators were required to be at the ground-air command post. Changes in missions were sometimes made while flights were in progress by radioing signals which indicated alternative targets numbered in advance on flight maps. According to Colonel Chuchev, mission assignment was not always clear: “It is hoped that the staffs of the higher air formations will, in assigning missions to bombers, pay more attention to the precise designation of the location of targets on the area assigned for bombing. This measure will increase yet more the effectiveness of our bombing attacks.”⁷⁷

In maneuver in the attack, bombers were less adapted to flexible movement than attack aviation, and in general, during the recent war, they used a simple direct horizontal approach in mass rather than the maneuver of continuous attack by individual planes. VVS bombers were almost always escorted by fighter aircraft. VVS bomber air bases were usually from 20 to 80 miles to the rear of the front line.

The postwar Soviet development of light jet bombers portends a considerable increase in the effectiveness and capabilities of the bomber arm of the VVS. In addition, it may well point to increased Soviet attention to the mission of interdiction, as contrasted with the heavy wartime stress on direct battlefield support.

Long-range Bombing (ADD)

In the early and mid-1930's, there was a strong preference among many Soviet air force officers for bomber aviation, and the percentage of bombers to other aircraft was relatively higher than in other countries or than it has been in the USSR since that time. Khripin, then deputy chief of the WS, wrote in 1935:

It is impossible to wage modern warfare without conducting independent air operations.... The effective fighting altitude of the bomber will be above the range of anti-aircraft guns, and when planes are travelling between 250 and 300 miles per hour a hit will be very exceptional. With the rapid increase in the fighting capacity of the airplane its importance as a method of air defense sinks correspondingly.⁷⁸

In November, 1936, Khripin reported that the Soviet air force was “the strongest in the world,” and stated that 60 per cent of its composition was bomber aircraft.⁷⁹ The ideas of the Italian general, Giulio Douhet, were, while generally criticized, not entirely ignored. Khripin wrote in the preface to the translation of Douhet’s book (in 1935): “Although his conception is on the whole untenable, a good many individual points present the greatest practical interest for us also. The experience of development of modern armaments shows that quite a few of the ideas expressed earlier by Douhet have been confirmed or are being confirmed.”⁸⁰ Lapchinsky, one of the foremost Soviet theoreticians of air doctrine in the prewar period, is described in recent writings as having “overthrown” the “bourgeois doctrine” of Douhet.⁸¹ He did, in line with Soviet military doctrine, reassert the predominant role of airpower as “cooperation in advancing the [land] army, for which all forces must be concentrated.”⁸² The very title of his last (posthumous) and most influential book, *The Air Army*, indicates its chief and novel idea: the creation of “air armies,” of which one or two would be assigned to each ground army group. This air army which Lapchinsky envisioned corresponded very closely to the tactical air army later adopted by the USSR in World War II, and which continues at present.⁸³ While it is true that Lapchinsky’s ideas were compatible with the Soviet doctrine of combined action of air and land forces, considerable freedom in implementing strategic combined action was sought, and separate strategic bombing was envisioned. As early as 1926, in *Aviation Tactics*, he wrote: “The actions of bombardment aviation must be part of the general strategic or operational plan, having the ultimate aim of the success of operations of the ground troops.”⁸⁴

A change in emphasis in the composition of the Soviet air force in the late 1930’s became noticeable, one cause possibly being the purge of many leading air force advocates of bombing aviation, including Khripin. Whether this was a calculated product of the purge or a mere by-product is not known. In February, 1938, the head of the air force, Smushkevich, claimed that bourgeois air fleets were predominantly bomber aviation and were increasing the proportion of bombers, and that this “easily characterized sharply the express offensive character of all the air forces of the capitalist countries.”⁸⁵ Some commanders connected with the Khripin point of view, however, remained in favor. Major General Ionov wrote as late as 1940: “Modern air forces can be charged with responsible tasks of strategic significance in destroying industrial objectives, destroying and disorganizing the work of basic communications, disorganizing state and military command channels.”⁸⁶

Prior to the war, bomber aviation was divided into close-range bombers and long-range or heavy bombers. Since 1936, there had been a Heavy Bombardment Force (the TBS). The aforementioned statements of Major General Markoff on the failure of his TBS group in June, 1941, and Lt. General Kopets’ suicide are evidence of its total unpreparedness for long-range bombing, and indeed for war in general.⁸⁷

In the first months of the war, very few raids were made over 100 miles beyond the front, except the “morale” raids of June 25, 1941, on Helsinki and of August, 1941, on Berlin. In April, 1942, Major General (now Chief Air Marshal) A. Golovanov, a former civil air flier and an adherent of long-range bombing, was named to command a new long-range force, the ADD [*Aviatsiia Dalnego Deitviia*]. At this time, the ADD possessed under 1000 aircraft.⁸⁸

During its first year, the ADD made very few raids. Beginning with the raids on Koenigsberg on April 11, 1943, and on Koenigsberg, Danzig, and Tilsit on April 16, a new period of activity began.⁸⁹ During the last 2 years of the war, a number of raids were made on Berlin, Bucharest, Koenigsberg, Budapest, Constanza, Warsaw, Stettin, and other large cities several hundred miles from the advancing front. Nevertheless, the ADD was generally employed for long-range tactical uses, such as interdiction of rail supply and attacks on airfields under 200 miles from the front line.⁹⁰

According to Lee, in the usual “major raids” of 1943-1945, of the 100 to 150 bombers participating in each raid, less than half reached their objectives, often only 20 or 30 per cent.⁹¹

Other nonstrategic-bombing functions of the ADD included supplying partisan groups in distant areas (including flights in 1944 to Tito in Yugoslavia and in support of the Slovak uprising). According to Marshal of the Air Force Vershinin, the ADD flew 7000 such flights during the war.⁹² Long-range reconnaissance was conducted by special components of this branch.

The official wartime (1942) *Manual on the Combat Action of Bomber Aviation*, which governed the employment of the ADD as well as the bomber component of the VVS, describes its missions, including many specific ones which in comparison with Western operations can only be termed tactical. The mission of the ADD is stated in the following paragraphs:

Long range aviation (ADD) is designated for dealing blows to the deep rear of the enemy with the aim of demolishing his military-economic might, and the morale forces of the troops and population, annihilating the main forces of the naval fleet, destroying their bases, the struggle with the rail, sea, and automotive transport on the main communication lines, annihilation of the enemy on his airdromes, deep in the entire depth of their bases, and destruction of the forces feeding them.

In individual cases ADD may be diverted for actions in the interests of separate operations of the ground troops and the navy, and also *for the destruction of the manpower and combat materiel of the enemy on the field of battle, and the most important objectives in the troop and operational rear.*⁹³

This last paragraph tends to convey the role actually performed by the ADD during the recent war, despite a later provision of these regulations which stated that: "The use of ADD on objectives which by their character and depth of disposition can successfully be destroyed by other forms of bomber aviation is not expedient."⁹⁴ In practice the ADD was used primarily for deep tactical, or in Soviet military terminology "operational," strikes. Its bases were usually well to the rear (over 100 miles behind the front lines).

The memoirs of Colonel S. Ushakov, of the ADD, are useful for obtaining, through the accounts of his personal experiences, a close-up view of the development of this arm of aviation throughout the war. One of the points brought out indirectly is the predominantly tactical role of this force, which was neither equipped nor trained to perform strategic-bombing missions of the type carried out by the Western Allies.⁹⁵

The ADD long-distance flights were not escorted by fighters, as were VVS attack and light-bomber flights. About half the ADD flights were long-distance, night, unescorted missions, and the others were semitactical daylight missions, often with fighter escort. Tactical bombers of the VVS, in contrast, flew almost all their missions by day, with escort.

The ADD was favored in many ways. It received the best equipment then available, although its equipment for strategic bombing did not compare with that available to the United States and Great Britain. It also had priority in the selection of navigators and flyers, and its men were given better rations and conditions of service in general than the VVS. Possibly as a result of the hostility engendered by this "elite" status, in December, 1944, the ADD was designated "The Eighteenth Air Army" (there then being seventeen tactical Air Armies). It is not entirely clear why this change was made, or to what extent it really was a change. Perhaps it marked explicit recognition of the real semitactical role of the ADD, but the arm's basic peculiarity remained: it was not attached (subordinated) to a ground force Front, as were the other seventeen Air Armies, but remained directly under the control of the High Command. After the reorganization in February, 1946, it was again given independent status. It remains today as a separate Chief Administration directly under the Ministry of War with no command ties to the WS (army air force).

Lt. Colonel G. Tokaev, formerly of the WS until his defection in 1948, indicated that the ADD is given special attention by the Politburo.⁹⁶ Its autonomous status within the Ministry of War denotes this as well. The increased importance of strategic bombing in an era of atomic warfare is without a doubt high in the consideration of the Soviet leadership. It has been reported that after Stalin's trip to Potsdam in 1945, when he first saw the destruction caused by the Western Allies' strategic bombers, strategic bombing was given increased attention.⁹⁷ Stalin's concern with learning about strategic bombing was noted by General Arnold, who records that at Teheran, in 1943, "although he was just beginning to learn something about strategic bombing" Stalin "asked innumerable and very intelligent questions ... about our long-range bombers."⁹⁸ Stalin, in talking with Churchill and Harriman in August, 1942, urged that "homes as well as factories should be destroyed."⁹⁹ This may have been a provocative statement, however, since the Soviets have used all opportunities to exploit the propaganda advantages of claims that the Western Allies' strategic bombing was inhumanely directed against civilians. The Soviets are quite aware of the importance of attacking the hostile rear by all means possible, but their long-range bombing was not used much for this purpose in the last war.

Recent high-level speeches and articles cited before indicate that the stress on combined operations, for the main part of Soviet air-power, apparently remains undiminished. The interest in strategic airpower and the Soviet lack of experience are both evidenced in a rather curious article in *Red Star* of September 26, 1947, which announced a "campaign" for the best "Aviation Manual for Long Range Operations," the closing date being set at December 31, 1948. Participants were to be relieved of other duties in order to compete, and the winners were to receive cash prizes from 3000 up to 20,000 rubles. (The author knows of no announcement of the results of this contest.)

So far as public pronouncements go, strategic airpower, and especially the record of American airpower and capabilities, is played down, and that of the Soviets is grossly exaggerated. Thus, Radio Moscow reported on an article in *Red Star*, by Col. General Rudenko, as follows:

An important aspect of the operations of the Soviet air force was the waves of long-range bombers on strategic targets far in the rear of the enemy. These waves began in the very first month of the war. General Rudenko remarks here that the U.S. Air Force was unable to begin strategic bombing in Europe until 1942.

... General Rudenko underscores that the credit for defeating the German fascist army, including the Nazi air force, belongs to the Soviet armed forces. Some politicians and the foreign military press who pose as theoreticians in military affairs, says Rudenko, are still trying to destroy historical truth by exaggerating the role of the United States and the British armed forces in the Second World War—for one thing the operations of the United States Strategic Air Force. Actually, according to United States statistics, the effort of the United States Air Force against fascist Germany directly represented less than one-third of all its war effort. Moreover, strictly war industrial targets in fascist Germany accounted for only one-tenth of the total tonnage of bombs dropped by United States fliers....

It should not be forgotten that the Anglo-American air force operated under very favorable conditions. In the first place, it encountered less resistance from the enemy because most of the Nazi fighter planes were massed on the Soviet-German front. After all, it was on this front that Soviet troops destroyed 75,000 of the 80,000 aircraft which Nazi industry produced during three years of war [sic!]. Second, the industrial base of the USAAF was never subjected to any enemy action.

General Rudenko points out that the U.S. air strategy during the Second World War proved to be defective. The pseudo-scientific theory that a war can be won by air bombing alone proved itself to be worthless. Such theories are entirely alien to Soviet military art.¹⁰⁰

Soviet discussions of strategic-bombing capabilities in general, and those of the USAF in particular, derogate their significance. This has been true not only of public propaganda statements, such as the one by Col. General Rudenko, quoted above, but even of writings restricted to high-ranking Soviet officers.¹⁰¹

On balance it appears, despite the lack of experience in strategic bombing in the last war, that the Soviets have placed considerable and significant stress on the development of an effective long-range bomber force capable of carrying the atomic bomb. To date, they have been forced to rely chiefly on their copy of the American B-29 (the Tu-4) medium bomber, but reports indicate that they are developing both a jet-propelled version of a medium bomber and a heavy bomber (roughly comparable to the B-36). While it is unlikely that the Soviets will fail to maintain their traditional concern with tactical aviation, they have demonstrated an intention also to develop an effective strategic-bombing arm. The unprecedented strategic situation of an enemy center effectively beyond the reach of the power of the Soviet ground-air combined team has undoubtedly forced them to make this significant amendment to their military doctrine.

Reconnaissance

During the Soviet-German war, reconnaissance was widely conducted by all types of aviation. As one Soviet writer stated:

Recent combat experience, especially in the experience of our offensive, teaches that *reconnaissance and observation of the enemy's action must be carried on not only by reconnaissance pilots, but also by fighters, bombers and attack planes.* ...¹⁰²

During the latter half of the war, increasing use was made of special reconnaissance squadrons and regiments. Following the usual Soviet distinction, reconnaissance was divided into strategic (fulfilling the missions of the High Command), operational (Front and Army task), and tactical (corps or division task) levels. Strategic reconnaissance was usually assigned to special reconnaissance squadrons of the ADD. Operational reconnaissance was primarily the mission of special reconnaissance units attached to the tactical air armies of the VVS. Tactical reconnaissance was often conducted by regular fighter (and sometimes by attack) *para's* or single aircraft.¹⁰³

Usually reconnaissance flights were unescorted. Pirogov, a former reconnaissance navigator-bombardier, stated that reconnaissance crews preferred not to have fighter escorts because they drew attention and might induce attack by suggesting that an important commander or staff officer was viewing the front.¹⁰⁴

During the war the Soviets were led by experience to conclude that "Good results are obtained by assigning crews to definite regions for reconnaissance. By systematically observing the very same locality, the flyer can study the region in detail and can easily discover the least change in ground conditions."¹⁰⁵

Airborne Troops (VDV)

The airborne forces, including paratroops and air- and glider-transported infantry, have been organized into the Airborne Troops [*Vozdushno-Desantnye Voiska*; VDV]. The VDV is autonomous and directly under the Ministry of War, and, according to the regulations, "Airborne troops are a resource of the high command."¹⁰⁶ *The Manual on the Combat Employment of the Airborne Forces of the Red Army* stated:

Airborne troops are a special type of troop, and consist of parachute, landing, and aircraft and glider elements. These elements are characterized by high mobility, powerful automatic weapons, and the ability to appear quickly and unexpectedly and to fight in the enemy's rear.¹⁰⁷

The **USSR** was a pioneer in the development of airborne troops. As early as 1927, small units were used against bands in Central Asia, and in 1930 the first paratroop units were formed. In 1935, 2500 airborne troops participated in the Kiev maneuvers; and in February, 1936, an entire airborne brigade of 3500 men and equipment was flown from Moscow to Vladivostok.¹⁰⁸

The 1936 *Field Regulations* stated that "Parachute descent units are an effective means of disorganizing the direction and work of the enemy's rear."¹⁰⁹ This mission of disrupting the hostile rear continues to be primary.

The *Manual on the Combat Employment of the Airborne Troops of the Red Army* describes the missions of airborne troops as follows:

Airborne troops have the following main missions:

- to support ground troops in encircling and liquidating the enemy;
- to disorganize the command of enemy troops and the operation of the enemy's rear;
- to occupy and hold important junctions and sectors in the enemy's rear;
- to occupy and destroy the enemy's airfields and air bases;
- to secure disembarkation of amphibious troops by seizing coastal areas.¹¹⁰

In addition, the dropping of agents and small teams to effect liaison with partisans or for special diversionary intelligence operations in the enemy's rear was prominent during the Soviet-German war.

The operations of present-day airborne troops are closely integrated with actions of other types of troops. According to the airborne forces *Manual*:

One must consider that the dropping (landing) of airborne troops which is not protected, carried out in time, or coordinated with the general operational plan, or which does not correspond to the allotted tasks, inevitably leads to unnecessary losses.¹¹¹

Their use is said explicitly to be predicated upon the principles of mass and surprise. Initiative is recognized to be of unusual significance. The *Manual* continues: "Combat operations in the enemy's rear require a high degree of combat activity, surprise, boldness, ability to maneuver, mobility, and the utmost exertion of physical and materiel resources of the airborne troops. Passive and indecisive activities of an airborne unit must inevitably lead to failure and unnecessary sacrifice."¹¹²

Following the usual Soviet distinction, airborne troops are differentiated as being tactical, operational, or strategic. Operational or strategic units are considered capable of all forms of combat. Airborne forces may be used either in concentrated or in dispersed units.¹¹³

Stress is laid on elaborate preparation and planning. Planning for strategic operations is done by the High Command; that for operational and tactical operations, by the Front commander. Specific decisions on tactical employment are made by the commander of the airborne forces to be committed. The *Manual* states: "The commander launching the airborne troops selects the zone for landing (dropping) the troops. The individual points for landing and dropping airborne waves and their units are determined by the commander of the airborne troops."¹¹⁴

The basic tactic of an airborne attack is described as a two-wave assault. The first echelon is composed of paratroops, who secure the area for the second echelon of airborne troops:

The first airborne wave must comprise a specially trained detachment, which has the task of immediately occupying all telephone, telegraph, and wireless stations in the landing zone so as to prevent the enemy from learning of the landing of airborne troops.¹¹⁵

This wave also prepares a landing place for transports or gliders to land and discharge the second wave, including the mortars, small guns, and light vehicles. The area is thoroughly reconnoitered from the air prior to the initiation of the entire operation, including a patrol made by a single aircraft immediately preceding the first wave. The airborne force is collected at bases about 100 miles behind the front line,¹¹⁶ and it takes off from these bases.

Tactics depend on the objective. Generally, the *Manual* prescribes: "Defeat of the enemy and destruction of his fighting capabilities can be attained by determined and bold maneuvering on his flanks and rear. *Envelopment and outflanking of gaps between individual enemy objectives and units are the basic methods of airborne maneuver.*"¹¹⁷ By day, objectives are to be attacked from all sides; by night, from one side only, and ambushing by small groups is advocated.¹¹⁸

Airborne attack is considered possible in any season of the year. It is considered especially useful in mountain and steppe or desert regions. A primary tactical mission is the securing of a bridgehead for a forced river crossing.¹¹⁹

Another primary tactical mission of airborne forces is the rendering of assistance in amphibious assaults and other forms of cooperation with the navy. The *Manual* provides:

Airborne descents can participate in operations of the Navy with the aims of

- seizing and holding a coast line for naval landings, and preventing the arrival of enemy reserves to the region of the landing;
- seizing and holding or destroying objectives on the enemy coast important to the Navy;
- seizing, together with a naval landing, or without one, but with the support of the fleet from the sea, of islands commanding naval communications, and existing strong points and bases of the enemy fleet.¹²⁰

However, these missions (and the disruption of the enemy's rear) remain secondary. The basic task is cooperation with the ground forces in the offensive and pursuit. Thus, "The most important mission of airborne troops is to support the ground forces in the encirclement and annihilation of the foe."¹²¹

In most cases, upon completing their mission, airborne troops join or are joined by the main ground or sea forces or return through the lines. However, the *Manual* provides that "In case it is impossible to return to their territory, airborne troops pass to partisan actions in the rear of the enemy."¹²²

From 1936 until the war, the airborne troops were part of the Army of Special Designation (AON). In 1940, one Soviet source indicated that they were made part of the long-range bombing force (TBS).¹²³ In any case, by the outbreak of the war they were already an independent resource of the NKO (Peoples' Commissariat of Defense), and in October, 1941, the VDV was created as an independent administration. The VDV was reorganized early in 1943 and placed under the *Stavka*.¹²⁴ It has remained autonomous, like the ADD and PVO, directly under the Ministry of War. The airborne troops have always been considered and treated as an elite force, even when used as infantry. Their pay and rations have always been relatively generous.

The basic unit before and during the war was the *brigad*, of 3500 to 4200 men, composed basically of 4 infantry battalions of 700 men each, plus various supporting units. Since the war the basic unit is reported to have become the division, comprising about 8000 men. Submachine guns are the basic individual weapon, supplemented by mortars and light guns and vehicles.

The Civil Air Fleet (GVF) would probably provide the bulk of the necessary transport aircraft in wartime. Experience with integral transports in the VDV in 1941 was not considered successful, but perhaps it may now be attempted under more auspicious circumstances.

Despite the relative stress on airborne forces in Soviet doctrine prior to the war, they were little used. In 1939 three brigades were used against the Mannerheim Line in Finland.¹²⁵ The results were very bad; the troops were either in disorder or were isolated. In June-July, 1940, 1000 paratroops were used in occupying Bessarabia, against no resistance.¹²⁶ They were used at Rostov in 1941 in conjunction with partisan and cavalry action in the German rear.¹²⁷ Small-scale airborne attacks at Smolensk and in the Crimea in 1941 failed with heavy losses, although at Smolensk one group did successfully pass to partisan operations.¹²⁸ In September, 1943, large-scale airborne operations (two brigades) were attempted in the Ukraine near Kiev, Kanev, and Cherkassy, but failed badly.¹²⁹ One more major airborne operation was attempted in Manchuria and Northern Korea in August, 1945, and succeeded, but against relatively weak opposition.¹³⁰ Small-scale operations (500 men) were used in April, 1945, at Koenigsberg and at Pillau.¹³¹

Much speculation has surrounded the absence of airborne activities by the Soviets in the Soviet-German war, especially in view of their great superiority in trained airborne forces. The German general and airborne expert, Student, suggested that "their training was insufficient due to lack of practice in navigation as well as in dropping."¹³² This was probably not the main reason. During 1941–1943 they were used at Smolensk, Leningrad, Stalingrad, and in the Ukraine as Guards infantry formations.¹³³ In 1944 and 1945, the airborne forces were reconstituted and available but were not needed, because the advancing ground forces successively gained bridgeheads with great success. Moreover, the partisan forces adequately served as diversion and intelligence in the enemy's rear. Also, as Lt. General Yarchevsky has admitted:.. landing of mighty airborne forces with strong technical equipment was beyond our strength. In the best cases descents of tactical significance were dropped at small depth with the calculation of their rapid assistance by land troops. Descents of operational significance were not successful, as they were shown to be weaker than the operational reserves of the defense in quantity and armament."¹³⁴

When they next became useful, they were used—in Manchuria in 1945. In the future they may be expected to be used in conjunction with land, amphibious, or internal subversive forces.

Air Defense (PVO)

Present-day defense against hostile air attack on the Zone of the Interior [*Vnytrennye Territorie Strany*, VTS] is vested in an autonomous administration of the Ministry of War and not in the Army Air Force (WS). This Air Defense [Command] is called the PVO [*Protivo-Vozdushnaia Oborona*]. The naval air arm also shares the mission of defense, especially of the coastal and fleet units, and its activities are probably closely coordinated with the PVO.

The PVO is composed of three major elements: The Air Observation, Warning and Communication Service, or VNOS [*Vozdushnoe Nabliudenie, Opoveshchenie, i Sviaz*]; the Fighter Interceptor Command, or IA-PVO [*Istrebitel'naia Aviatsiia PVO*]; and the Anti-aircraft Artillery, or ZA-PVO [*Zenitnaia Artilleriia PVO*]. The latter two are sometimes designated together as the AZO [*Aviazenitnaia Oborona*]. Passive and civil defense, the MPVO [*Mestnoe PVO*], is under the MVD and is closely coordinated with the civil-police and fire-fighting sections of that ministry.

The VNOS includes the Soviet early-warning radar, GCI radar, IFF identification techniques, observation spotter networks, and searchlights. It communicates five facts: "time, direction (course) of flight of the enemy aircraft, altitude, quantity, and type of enemy aircraft."¹³⁵ Warning plans for protection of industrial targets were issued in 1939, based on the use of local telephone facilities.¹³⁶

Fighter interception has been considered the basic means of active air defense, at least as late as 1949.¹³⁷ During 1944, fighter aviation is said to have destroyed 68 per cent of all German aircraft downed by the Soviet PVO.¹³⁸

The mission of the fighter component of the PVO is air defense of strategic targets by the interception of attacking hostile bombers; this component may be given the secondary mission of defending any other target in the region which is not included in the specific strategic area.

According to Colonel N. Vlasov, prior to the recent war only the Soviet regulations correctly stated the mission of fighter interceptors: independent fighter action and combined action with antiaircraft artillery.¹³⁹ Combined action with antiaircraft artillery is achieved on the basis of prearranged zones of action.¹⁴⁰

In general, the tactics, organization, and aircraft of the fighter aviation of the PVO and the VVS are similar, although personnel in the former probably receive more training in interception. "States of readiness" are more closely observed in the PVO, and all PVO air bases are said to be on permanent 24-hour alert. The PVO had very little experience during the war, since the *Luftwaffe* also concentrated on close support of ground troops rather than on strategic or deep bombing. This was reflected in the lack of both developed all-weather interception techniques and combat experience on the part of many PVO pilots.

Standing air patrols are used in wartime, at least near large cities, for purposes of early warning, defense, and diversion. Small units (from one to three aircraft) are sometimes used as part of the VNOS to "pace" hostile attacking aircraft in order to determine their number, type, attitude, speed, and course of flight.

Interception tactics stress surprise and the initial assault. As Lt. Colonel Safronov wrote: "The first salvo should be well aimed and powerful, because it, as a rule, decides the outcome of the battle, and after the first attack, the pursuit plane will be discovered by the enemy, and the surprise factor will cease to operate."¹⁴¹

Strict formation flying in the attack is also stressed, with several *gruppas* of six aircraft attacking in line abreast for concentrated fire. Night flying assumes cardinal importance and is emphasized in the training of PVO flyers, but their night performance is not considered outstanding.

The PVO fighter aviation is reported to be treated as an elite force and is given the best aircraft, the most thorough training, better living conditions, and other advantages both to personnel and for combat action.

Strategic antiaircraft artillery (ZA-PVO) is separate from the Chief Administration for Artillery and the army field forces. (Troop formations include organic antiaircraft weapons of smaller than 85 mm caliber; this is called troop or field PVO.) The ZA-PVO is organized in batteries and divisions for the defense of special points and in from three to five concentric rings around large cities. Formerly, the usual Soviet tactic of antiaircraft fire was not aimed fire, but the creation of a "solid curtain of fire." This resulted in destruction of fewer aircraft, but was considered effective for repulsing attempts at penetration. In addition to these circles of batteries with "walls" of fire, it is probable that special strategic points today have additional aimed-fire protection.

Soviet antiaircraft artillery did not perform with outstanding ability in the Soviet-German war. On the contrary, one instance observed by qualified American personnel demonstrated a conspicuous lack of success. A German raid on the U.S. air base at Poltava, in the Ukraine, on the night of June 21–22, 1944, completely destroyed fifty of a mission of B-17's from Britain immediately after the arrival of these aircraft. During this attack, opened by a flare drop, the anti-aircraft batteries fired 28,000 rounds of medium and heavy shells, with the aid of searchlights, without bringing down a single enemy aircraft. Of the 40 night-defense Yak fighters on hand, only 4 or 5 got into the air, to no

avail.¹⁴² A former German officer, Lt. General H. J. Rieckhoff has, however, commented on the “great increase in strength and effectiveness of the Russian air defense forces (anti-aircraft artillery and signal corps [warning service]) from 1941 to 1945.”¹⁴³

Fighter-interception (IA) and anti-aircraft-artillery (ZA) actions are coordinated in joint active defense (AZO) by means of joint defensive plans based on a grid system covering the area to be defended. This system was adopted prior to World War II and has continued since.¹⁴⁴

Since the war, the Soviets have devoted considerable effort to the improvement of their strategic interception capabilities, and it would not be wise to interpret present Soviet air-defense measures in the light of World War II experience.

Soviet Aviation Training

The Soviets devote considerable attention to the air training of young people. The premilitary Voluntary Society for Support of the Army, Air Force, and Fleet (DOSAAF) has about fifteen million members. It maintains a number of aviation training schools.

The general training and preparation of Soviet airmen is adequate. There are, however, a number of qualifications to this evaluation:

First was the failure during the war to train adequately for the specific types of missions which were flown. To cite one extreme case at the outset of the recent war, former Major General Alexei Markoff described the experience of the unit under his command as follows:

With a wing of long-range bombers under my command, I was told to follow the useless “invasion of Germany” plan; opening the sealed orders containing our war tasks, I learned for the first time that these planes were expected to fly 600 miles after dark, and bomb German factories. Yet most of the crews had barely begun to study night flying. I ordered the bomber commander to choose the best eighteen plane crews, and sent them off after dusk, fearing what would happen. The results of this flight were ghastly. Two bombers were wrecked in accidents, five more made forced landings, six returned to our airbase without finding the target, and only five of the eighteen fulfilled their mission.¹⁴⁵

Second is the relative paucity of instrument aids and safety devices. Former Soviet flyers have complained of this. The Soviet attitude was expressed by Colonel Berezin during the war:

Well, we are all in favor of every possible modern aid to flying, especially in the leisurely days of peacetime. In combat we want to concentrate on the twelve or thirteen essential instruments. Combat flights are relatively shorter than US flights and do not require all the elaborate accessories evolved by aeronautical science. Particularly it is advisable not to have the attention of young combat pilots distracted. Nor is there any need for that when you consider that each unit is led by an experienced commander.¹⁴⁶

A writer in the official *Herald of the Air Fleet* (in 1947) admitted indirectly that reasons other than concern with not “burdening” the flyer were involved, and that the flyers themselves wished for more modern instrumentation. He wrote:

It is proper to point out certain objections by pilots to our aviation constructors and industries, who leave out blind-flying instruments...

How can it be explained that up to this time such a wonderful and necessary instrument as the artificial horizon [*aviagorizont*] is not installed in single-engine aircraft? ...

Also the complaints of our pilots to the aviation industry regarding the quality of artificial horizons which don't have the necessary means for adjustments in flight are justified.¹⁴⁷

It has been estimated that during the war accidents due to weather or technical defects accounted for more Soviet losses than did German action. Since the war these defects have apparently not been remedied in full.

Third, all-weather and night flying has not been highly developed in Soviet training. Despite recognition of their importance, night-flying and all-weather-flying aids and training were not advanced during the recent war because of the need for rapid basic training of a large number of flyers. Navigation was poor by Western standards, bombing was frequently inaccurate, and ammunition was wasted.¹⁴⁸

Postwar Soviet training, and instrument development, has of course aimed at correcting these serious faults. Former Soviet air force officers who have defected to the West since the war indicate that these inadequacies remain. For example, one former Soviet air force officer reported that many flyers in Germany in 1946 suffered from hemorrhages and other disorders because of lack of proper training, especially that for high-altitude flying. Also, he reported that a group of newly trained bomber crews arriving from the Soviet Union had to be sent back because of

insufficient night-flying training.^{[149](#)} In an address on Aviation Day in 1949, Marshal Vershinin (then chief of the VVS) admitted these deficiencies by indicating the emphasis being placed on developing all-weather and night-flying aids and training.^{[150](#)}

CHAPTER 21

SOVIET EMPLOYMENT OF SEA

POWER AND AMPHIBIOUS

OPERATIONS

The Soviet Navy (VMF)

The Soviet Navy was independent of the Peoples' Commissariat of Defense (NKO) during the war, but in February, 1946, it was merged in the Peoples' Commissariat of the Armed Forces (NKVS), soon redesignated the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MVS). In February, 1950, the Ministry of the Navy [Naval Fleet] (MVMF) was again established as an independent ministry, until its merger into the Ministry of Defense (MO) in March, 1953).

The Soviet public press constantly reiterates the theme, "Our country is a great naval power."¹ Molotov expressed this aim in 1938, declaring that "The mighty Soviet power must have a navy, both on sea and ocean, commensurate with its interests and worthy of our great cause."² As with Old Russia, there is more of a tradition of pride in naval accomplishments than the record warrants—probably for that very reason.

The general organization of the Soviet Navy is outlined in Appendix I. Its chief components are: (a) the surface fleets, (b) the submarine fleets, (c) naval aviation, (d) coastal artillery, (e) the internal (river and lake) flotillas, (f) the naval infantry (marines), (g) naval bases, (h) certain fortified coastal areas, and, finally, (i) the various administrative, training, political, and service units.³

Coastal Defense

Coastal defense for up to 50 miles inland is naval responsibility, including special areas in the Baltic Sea and Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk on the Pacific Ocean. Naval bases are divided into “rear bases,” “operational bases of permanent designation,” and “maneuver bases,” which are created close to the hostile areas.⁴ Shore defense includes the SNiS (Shore Observation and Communication Service, including radar warning), stationary and mobile coastal artillery, antiaircraft artillery and fighter defense, antichemical defense, mines and other obstacles, and naval infantry garrisons at fleet bases and special points.⁵

The Fleets

The four Fleet Commands, which include command over the geographically corresponding coastal defenses and air arms, are the Northern, Baltic Sea, Black Sea, and Pacific (or Far Eastern). The strongest surface contingents are in the Baltic and Black Seas, and the strongest coastal defenses are in the Baltic Sea.

The Soviet Navy is expected to be capable of both independent and combined operations, but the stress is laid on combined action supporting the army's war plan. As Stalin said in one of his wartime orders of the day, “the Red Fleet is the true *helper* of the Red Army.”⁶

Rear Admiral Belli brought out very clearly in 1946 the primary mission of the navy: the support of the ground forces. He wrote:

War on the sea has historically never been an independent phenomenon, but always a part of a war as a whole. From the point of view of the conduct of military actions, the sea ties together the diffuse parts of one and the same state of an alliance of nations, and divides the enemies. Therefore war on the sea is expressed, first of all, in a struggle for sea communications, that is, in the defense of one's own sea lanes and in striving to break the maritime communications of the enemy.

From the experience of the Soviet and foreign armed forces in the recent war it is necessary to consider it completely confirmed that the combined action of land troops with air and sea forces is a foundation of the contemporary conduct of war.⁷

Combined action is considered strategic, operational, or tactical in accordance with the usual Soviet military concept, but the only missions classed as “strategic” are the securing of friendly sea lanes, the attacking of the enemy’s sea lanes, and coastal defense in general. Admiral Belli stated that the significance of war on the sea depends on three factors:

- (a) the degree of dependence of the given state or its enemy on maritime supply;
- (b) the necessity for a strategic offensive by sea routes on the enemy’s coast, or the strategic defense of one’s own coast;
- (c) the capability of the fleet to defend its maritime communications and coasts, and to attack the maritime communications and coasts of the enemy.⁸

Admiral Alafuzov made a seven-point summary of the missions of the navy which may be said to reflect and represent Soviet naval doctrine:

The fleet is called upon to fulfill the following basic missions:

- (1) defense of its own sea communications;
- (2) interruption of the sea communications of the enemy;
- (3) the defense of its territory against invasion by the enemy from the sea;
- (4) invasion of the enemy’s territory from the sea;
- (5) defense of its shore installations;
- (6) the destruction of the enemy’s shore installations;
- (7) support of the flanks of the army.⁹

Admiral Alafuzov further declared that “In the catalogue of the missions of the fleet, it is appropriate to add the task of evacuation of an isolated sector....” He and Admiral Belli listed four such actions carried out by the Red Fleet in World War II: Odessa, Hango, Tallin, and Sevastopol.¹⁰

The Soviet conception of naval functions and missions is essentially in accord with “traditional” Western naval doctrine as reflected in the writings of Mahan, Corbett, Castex, Brodie, *et al.*, with the single important difference that the Soviets do not strive for “command of the sea.” The subservience of the Soviet naval actions to the land arm, discussed more fully later, is fundamentally a distinction in concept caused by a realization of the geographical and other limitations as they bear peculiarly on the Soviet use of naval power. Similarly, the relative stress on submarine warfare, on

the defensive use of surface vessels, and on the sharp division of the Soviet Navy into four largely independent fleet commands is all caused by similar limitation of opportunity to support other forms of naval power.

The operations of the Red Fleet in the Soviet-German war were summarized by Admiral Alafuzov as follows:

The Soviet naval forces defended our communications along the coast of the Black Sea, in the Eastern Baltic, in the North, assured the supplying of besieged Odessa, of Hango Island and Sevastopol, assured the communications on Lake Ladoga of besieged Leningrad, defended the eastern sector of communication which connected us through Murmansk and Archangel with our allies, interrupted the communication of the enemy in the Southern Baltic, in the western part of the Black Sea, in the waters of northern Scandinavia, in the Crimea, (cut off by land in 1944), defended their territory against enemy invasion from the sea, repulsing his landings in the Lyn Bay and by Keigust (1941), on the island of Sukho (1942), and by their disposition prevented landing attempts along other points on our coast, carried out attacks from the sea on enemy occupied territories (Feodosiia, Kerch, Novorossisk, and a great many smaller operations in the Black Sea as well as in other seas), defended installations on their own territory by their very disposition and in a number of cases by battle....^{[11](#)}

Based on these missions of the navy, Admiral Belli drew up nine forms of combined action for the navy in support of the army, and four for the army in support of the navy. They are summarized here from his more extended treatment.^{[12](#)} The nine forms of combined action for the navy are:

1. Destruction of the enemy's supplies on sea lanes.
2. Defense of one's own supplies on sea lanes.
3. Strategic defense of coasts from invasion.
4. Holding naval bases.
5. Landing operations [Normandy is the example used].
6. Repulsing enemy landings.
7. Shelling the enemy on the land troops coastal flank.
8. Evacuation by sea of isolated groups.
9. Participation in liquidating an enemy pinned against a coast.

On their part, land troops cooperate with the fleet by

1. Seizing hostile coasts (for bases).
2. Holding coastal territories (for bases).
3. Participation in repulsing landings.
4. Participation of land aviation in naval tasks.

The chief mission of the navy is considered, by both naval and army officers, to be defense of the army's littoral "flank" and attack of the littoral "flanks" and rear of the enemy army. Major General Korkodinov, of the (Army) General Staff, wrote as follows in an article for naval officers:

Extremely wide opportunities for coordination in action of the land troops are open to the naval forces. During the Fatherland War our Naval Fleet conducted the following operations in the interests of land troops: securing the flanks of the land armies from "flanking" by sea, that is, from the landings in the rear of the land front and from the artillery fire of hostile vessels' guns; support of the ground troops acting in littoral areas by means of bombarding the enemy and "flanking" his coastal side; attacking the sea communications of the enemy with the aim of interdicting supply of his army; securing one's own sea communications; disruption of the evacuation of enemy troops and valuables from regions which our land troops have threatened (for example, from the Crimea, from the region between Tukums and Libau, from East Prussia); evacuation of one's own land troops surrounded by the enemy (for example, the evacuation of troops from Odessa and from Sevastopol in 1941 and 1942).¹³

Admiral of the Fleet (and then Chief of the Naval Staff) Isakov also wrote that "The main and most important task carried out by our navy in all Soviet waters has been to *protect the strategic flanks of the Red Army extending to the coasts, against enemy landing parties and naval operations*, and to direct its own blows against the enemy's flanks and rear" and that "*The enemy did not attack any of our army's flanks from the sea*, while our destroyers, gunboats and patrol boats poured in a devastating *flank fire* on German, Finnish and Rumanian coast batteries...."¹⁴ Admiral Belli wrote that "Both in periods of active strategic defense and the transition to the strategic offensive by our Soviet Army, our fleet successfully covered the coastal flanks of the ground troops; in the entire war there was no case when these flanks were exposed to an attack in the strategic sense."¹⁵

The navy has the chief responsibility for amphibious assaults on the enemy "flanks." The naval infantry [*morskaia pekhota*, or marines] make such landings, followed (in large operations) by immediate landings of army units. A special form of this combined action is the cooperation of the naval river flotillas with the army. The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated: "The successful actions of river flotillas in combined action with ground troops and aviation can have a decisive significance on the outcome of battle."¹⁶

Soviet naval doctrine, as does military doctrine, aims at continuous struggle until the annihilation of the enemy. As Admiral of the Fleet Isakov declared:

Naval actions in the present war have taken the form of a life-and-death struggle, *tense and continuous, on the surface, below the surface, in the air and along the coasts*. This struggle was waged incessantly without pause or respite, with every available means, a struggle aimed at defeating and annihilating the German invader wherever he might be, in other words a “*war of annihilation*,” fought out on the sea. This gigantic struggle was made up of thousands of battle episodes, daily clashes and actions which at times assumed major proportions....¹⁷

Yet *the Soviet Navy has never engaged in a major naval battle*. Admiral Isakov (in 1944) admitted: “Not once in three years of war did the enemy employ vessels larger than destroyers in Soviet waters; In all their actions, the men of the Soviet fleet and air forces have never sighted the silhouette of a German cruiser, to say nothing of a battleship.”¹⁸

The Soviet Navy is very weak in large surface vessels, as most of the existing fleet consists of miscellaneous prerevolutionary and former Axis vessels, now obsolescent. It is well equipped with eight “Kirov class” cruisers, a number of destroyers, and numerous small coastal and torpedo craft.

On the other hand, the submarine arm is estimated at over 300 submarines, of which a considerable number are believed to be *schnörkel*-equipped modern craft capable of long-range operations. This is more than the German fleet ever possessed, and present Soviet production probably exceeds the peak German construction rate.¹⁹ The submarine branch is preferred by Soviet naval personnel; perhaps because, as in the U.S. Navy, pay is higher than that of the surface and coastal forces. During the war, its actions were largely restricted to home coastal defense. Since the war, increasing attention has been given to it. As Captain of the First Rank [equivalent to Commodore, USN] Shergin wrote:

The experience of the Fatherland War, as the Second World War on the sea in general, shows that submarines can be extremely effectively used in the struggle against sea communications, and under certain conditions and relations of forces in the theater, is the type of naval force fulfilling the main role in the mission of interdicting enemy supply by sea.²⁰

Soviet ships and small units are well handled tactically at sea, but would be restricted to operation in Soviet home waters; only submarines could gain the high seas in a contested situation.

Soviet naval doctrine differs from their military doctrine in defining its mission in terms of “zones of operation” rather than as missions to destroy certain enemy groupings. Admiral Alafuzov defined this as follows:

The *zone of operations* of the fleet has been mentioned above. The fulfillment by the fleet of the missions set before it can be considered to be assured in the case when their solution is taking place in its *zone of dominion*. This latter zone is *determined by the relation of forces* between the combatants and by their strategic disposition in the theater of war.²¹

Naval engagements are considered to consist of four main stages: (a) preparation, (b) deployment, (c) fulfillment of the mission, and (d) mopping up [*svertyvanie*].²²

The Naval Air Force (VVS-VMF)

The naval air force (VVS-VMF), although entirely land based, has the principal mission of supporting all types of naval operations. As Admiral Alafuzov wrote:

The air force is the most universal type of force of the fleet. Simultaneously with the surface forces and together with them it plays the decisive role in the struggle for maintaining and extending the zone of the dominion of its fleet.²³

In close-shore action, which is usual for the Soviet Navy, the role of the naval air force has been regarded as being exceptionally important. Admiral of the Fleet Isakov noted: "Experience in modern naval warfare in Russian waters, as well as in the Mediterranean and the Pacific, proves that successful naval operations can be conducted close to the shore or in narrow areas only if air supremacy has been secured over the zone of operations."²⁴ The specific tasks of the naval air force are:

- (a) long-range reconnaissance;
- (b) locating and destroying enemy submarines;
- (c) participating in escorting convoys or single vessels; (d) destroying the enemy's air and surface forces;
- (e) aerial mining of specific coastal areas;
- (f) attacking enemy naval bases.

Of these, antisubmarine defense has been strongly emphasized in recent doctrine; practice would of course adjust to the hostile action.²⁵

Antisubmarine action is sought by a combined surface-air team when feasible: “Aviation antisubmarine actions are most successful when coupled with closely worked out combined action with vessels.”²⁶ There are no indications of Soviet thinking regarding the employment of air forces against aircraft carriers, an activity in which the Soviets had no experience in World War II. The naval air force was frequently used for support of land operations in the nearest combat area and for fighter interception.²⁷

Prior to the war, the bomber arm of the navy was predominant. The *Provisional Manual on Combat Employment of Bombing Aviation of the Red Fleet* stated:

Bombardment aviation is the basic offensive kernel of the aviation of the RKVMF [Red Fleet], Possessing powerful striking force, it is designed for deciding the most important combat tasks of the navy, pursuing the aim of annihilating the naval and aerial combat forces of the enemy in the theater of war.²⁸

During the war, attack and torpedo-plane aviation was greatly developed. As of 1947, the naval air force possessed the following categories of aircraft: bomber, mine-torpedo, fighter, attack, reconnaissance, and auxiliaries (training, supply, liaison, etc.).²⁹

The aircraft used are for the most part army air force types adapted to naval service. In general, the experience of the German-Soviet war indicates that the naval air force was fairly effective in coastal action, but not especially so against shipping. Postwar training appears to emphasize more practice over the sea. Naval air action was intensive only in the final offensives in the Baltic and Black Sea areas.

The naval air fleets are operationally subordinate to the corresponding area fleet commands; one or two air fleets are assigned to each surface fleet command.³⁰

Amphibious Operations

An amphibious landing, like an airborne drop or landing, is often termed a *desant* (“descent”), as well as a *vysadka* (“landing”). Similar to the Soviet conception of airborne operations, amphibious operations are considered

essentially as being part of combined operations with the ground forces team (although tactically airborne forces may substitute for land forces in combined action with naval landings). Finally, both are considered specifically as important aids in encirclement. As one source expressed this: “The plan of combined operations of a naval descent with aviation must be established on a calculation of the encirclement and complete annihilation of the foe.”³¹ And the 1940 *Field Regulations* provided that “A landing can have as its aim the encirclement and defeat of elements on the hostile littoral flank, and also the fulfillment of independent operational missions for the creation of a new front.”³² This mission of the navy plays a significant role in combined naval-land action. Again, the 1940 *Field Regulations* stated:

The naval fleet can demonstrate cooperation to troops by its struggle against the hostile fleet, by maneuver directed immediately against troops of the enemy (a landing), and by the fire of its artillery on hostile troops.

In the first order, troops give the fleet cooperation by seizing and holding littoral points (bases, ports, etc.) important to the fleet, giving aid in preserving the fleet against fire from the shore, covering the fleet from the air by its combat aviation and by fire means.³³

The missions of amphibious assault may be summarized as follows:

- A “flank” attack in conjunction with a land offensive;
- Rear harassment and raids;
- Beachheads on a hostile shore for a new front;
- Diversionsary fronts and reconnaissance.

Landings are made in two waves. The initial (assault) echelon is made up of the so-called naval infantry [*morskaia pekhota*], or marines, and in large operations the second (consolidation) echelon is composed of specially trained army troops. Admiral of the Fleet Isakov described the amphibious operations of the Soviet-German war as follows, pointing out this division: “In all cases the landing forces were made up of marines or special units of sailors. In the larger operations the marines and sailors formed the advance party [followed by army units].”³⁴ The naval infantry is reserved for this special assault task, and is not used in usual positional land warfare. It is usually withdrawn once the beachhead is secure.³⁵

During the Soviet-German war the marine force was hastily augmented by reinforcements drawn from miscellaneous component parts of the navy. In many cases the naval surface vessels were unable to operate, and their crews

were transformed into marines. Students from the coastal artillery schools were also converted into marines. As Fleet Admiral Isakov wrote: “In addition, *the navy assigned considerable numbers of seamen for operations on land* where they fought side by side with the army. Naval battalions, regiments and brigades ... not only distinguished themselves in actions along the coast, but also at Moscow and Stalingrad.”³⁶ Especially in the defense of Odessa, Sevastopol, Stalingrad, Leningrad, Hango, and Tallin did naval personnel from the sea and from internal flotilla units join in the land battle as shock infantry. Navy coastal and antiaircraft artillery was used in Leningrad and elsewhere³⁷ and was even taken to Moscow in the fall of 1941 for antiaircraft defense.³⁸ Naval aviation was similarly utilized.

Schools trained special marine personnel, and up to 25 brigades of 3000 men each were activated in the Soviet-German war. During the war the Soviets launched a number of amphibious operations, almost all of very restricted scope. In the Finnish war of 1939-1940, several landing attempts had been made, but all either failed or were called off because of heavy artillery opposition.

The first amphibious landing in the Soviet-German war was a diversionary relief for Odessa made at Grigorievka on September 22, 1941.³⁹ The most important amphibious operations of the war were the landings at Kerch, Eupatoriia, and Feodosiia in the Crimea in December, 1941, when very large numbers of troops were committed, diverting the Germans from the assault on Sevastopol. (Eupatoriia and Feodosiia were cleared in January; but Kerch, not until May, 1942.)⁴⁰ It should be noted that the water barrier was narrow (making the operation a massive river crossing) and also largely frozen. Landings were made again in the Crimea in conjunction with the land offensives of 1943-1944. Kerch, Feodosiia, and Nikolaev were assaulted again, as were Novorossisk, Myshako, Mariupol, Taganrog, Pervomaisky, and other places.⁴¹ These were generally minor actions on the “flank” of advancing land armies.

After the Crimea had been completely reoccupied in 1944, further offensive operations were conducted by the Black Sea Fleet during the autumn of that year. Landings were made at Akkerman, Izmail, Zhebriani, Ochakov, Sulina, Constanza, Varna, and Burgas.⁴² These were small operations, usually coordinated with land offensives, and they met with

relatively little resistance (e.g., there were only 1400 men in the entire Sulina garrison).

In the north, the only action worthy of mention was the assault on Petsamo in 1944. After a feint elsewhere, landings were effected at Volokovaiia and Pechenga (Petsamo) against negligible opposition.⁴³ At Petsamo airborne forces were also used. There was also an amphibious assault on Moonzund Island in 1945. “Amphibious landings” were also made in crossing Lake Ladoga, the Desna and Dnepr rivers, and the Pripiat and Pinsk marshes.⁴⁴ Finally, amphibious landings were made in the Kurile Islands, southern Sakhalin, and at Chongjin and Wonsan in Korea in August, 1945.

The diversionary aim of most of these landings may be seen in the following passages from Admiral of the Fleet Isakov’s book:

Throughout the war, the enemy was constantly menaced by our landing forces at various sectors of the Black Sea coast. This compelled the German Command to maintain large forces of troops, artillery and other armaments along the coasts to fend off potential Soviet landing forces.

... the Soviet Black Sea fleet carried out extensive amphibious operations, and frequently and successfully landed diversionist, tactical and operational forces from the sea. This presented a constant threat to the enemy’s flanks and rear. Because of this constant menace the Germans were compelled to hedge themselves in behind every possible type of fortification, bristling with cannon, machine-guns and ramified entanglements, garrisoned by a considerable part of their troops. Such fortifications were spread over the vast spaces they had occupied along the coasts.

*Thus, operations by our fleet riveted the enemy to the coast and paralyzed large bodies of his men which otherwise could have been hurled into action at the front*⁴⁵

This is contrasted with the German record of only two small and unsuccessful attempted landings in the Baltic.⁴⁶

Aviation has the missions of reconnaissance, preparation attacks, the dive-bombing of coastal artillery, and also of support cover during a large-scale landing operation.⁴⁷

Artillery, naval and other, is also expected to play an important role in furnishing continuous support until the landing is consolidated. Captain of the First Rank [Commodore, USN] Sagoian wrote that

In view of the limited possibilities for the application of ship gunnery for fire support of a landing force from the sea, the correct calculation of means and the organization, utilization and continuity of fire support by ship gunnery before the landing force has consolidated itself on the beachhead have decisive importance for the success of the operation.

The success of the operation requires the careful preparation of all types of participating weapons, joint planning and well-integrated operational-tactical cooperation in all types of artillery,

land, ship, and shore. Special training of ground troops, ships of the fleet, and aviators, must be conducted in coastal regions or in specially equipped areas which approximate combat conditions to a maximum degree.

A landing operation in connection with a movement of troops by sea is one of the most complex forms of joint operations by ground, naval, and air forces. Like other forms of offensive operations by ground troops, it requires a preliminary artillery offensive to destroy enemy defenses in the landing sector; subsequent continuous artillery support to effect a firm defense of the landing area occupied on shore.⁴⁸

Land artillery was used in the Kerch (1943), Novorossisk (1943), Vyborg (1944), and Moonzund (1945) operations. At Novorossisk, land artillery fire and naval gunfire were coordinated.⁴⁹

Fleet Admiral Isakov, then Chief of Staff of the Soviet Navy, drew three conclusions from the record of Soviet amphibious operations during the recent war (in addition to a fourth already cited, i.e., the use of naval personnel). He stated that all these operations had the following characteristics:

- (a) The landing operations, though nearly always attended by fierce fighting against a strongly fortified enemy, were inevitably successful.
- (b) Owing to general operational conditions, the landing had mostly to be carried out in the autumn, winter or spring in stormy weather.
- (c) The Black Sea sailors could not use special landing craft, but only fishing boats, launches, and seiners, a fact which rendered the landing operations difficult, and especially so when encumbered by the army's heavy equipment.⁵⁰

This admission of the lack of landing craft is of some significance.

In addition to these admitted deficiencies, we must note that all operations were small in size, very rarely over regimental size.⁵¹ (Kerch is the one exception.) There was a strong preference for landings at night, at established landing positions, against minor resistance, and with naval gunfire support.

Preference is for offensive action in a combined operation with land forces or, in their absence, with air, airborne, and naval support. As Isakov stated: "In essence, a landing is an offensive operation, and, in fact, belongs to the most difficult and complex actions carried out under present-day conditions by the combined forces of the army, the fleet, and the air force."⁵²

Normal infantry weapons, including light artillery and mortars, were used; but the Soviets are believed to be keenly interested in special commando-type equipment and techniques. Postwar training has included the use of tanks.⁵³ Special army units are trained for second echelons of landing forces in a large amphibious operation.

Unity of command in combined naval-army landings was stressed in the 1940 *Field Regulations*, which provide that the naval commander is “usually” in command of the operation, but that it depends on the situation.⁵⁴

In the Soviet-German war, the naval commander was always in command of the operation (except in river or lake crossings), but the commander of the landing force itself was the senior army officer when army troops were used. In smaller operations in which only naval infantry were used, the marine commander was in charge. The landing-force commander assumes command as soon as he reports that the landing is secured. In general, this approximates Western doctrine on command in combined sea-land-force operations.

CHAPTER 22

SPECIAL COMBAT CONDITIONS

The Soviet armed forces are declared to be always ready for and capable of action under all conditions of climate and terrain. The 1940 *Field Regulations* stated:

Troops must be ready to conduct battle in any conditions: day and night, summer and winter, in the mountains, forests, or forest-swamp terrain, etc.¹

This theme is frequently repeated.² Their readiness for combat under any conditions is not distinctive, although it does reflect a strong desire to use all opportunities to the maximum of their potentialities. It does not mean that the Soviets underestimate such factors.

The muddy season and its implications for “modern war of motors,” to use Stalin’s quaint phrase, was underestimated by the Germans with serious consequences. The ability of the Soviet command and men to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles, such as certain swamplands and rivers, was also frequently underestimated by the Germans.*

* General Haider, in his “Diary: Campaign in Russia,” Vol. 7, in the entry for August 6, 1941, stated: “The Russians have an uncanny ability for moving on roads impassable for our troops, and building concealed river crossings.”

Finally, these natural features of the Russian scene possess certain modifying qualities which must be objectively judged by the Soviets and any opponent who finds himself at some time within the scope of their influence; these are, of course, but variations in general patterns of climatic and terrain limitations and opportunity which the Soviets and any opponent must calculate in any geographical arena.

In this chapter, the considerations of Soviet doctrine concerning forests and swamps, mountains and elevations, inhabited places, rivers and other

minor water barriers, winter and its muddy aftermath, and night will be briefly reviewed.

Forests and Swamps

The basis of Soviet combat action in forests and woods was concisely stated in the 1940 *Field Regulations*: “All kinds of troops can conduct combat operations in forest. Close combat and the initiative of the commanders of the units secures success in forest combat.” Specifically, by arms:

Infantry is the most capable for action in the forests.

Cavalry must conduct battle dismounted.

Howitzer artillery and mortars secure forest battle in all conditions....

Tanks are preferably used in small units....

Aviation is used for annihilating enemy troops in forest roads...,³

Soviet troops were well prepared, by background as much as by training, for combat in the forests. Wooded areas were favored for the collection of forces preparatory to an attack, and the edge of the woodland was approved as the jumping-off place of the assault. Positions were swiftly prepared from felled trees. Rivers and swamps in or near woodland, which means much of Russia, were crossed by the traditional Russian “corduroy” bridges of logs. In the defense, forests were well fortified, with mines and firepower covering their approaches and all paths and glades. Bunkers, well camouflaged, were built quickly and well. Ambushes by infantry or small tank units were common. Relatively small numbers of men sometimes pinned down large enemy formations. Command was well organized.⁴ Examples from the Soviet-German war abound; the offensive actions east of Lvov in June, 1944, and across the upper Donets in August, 1943, were outstanding, and defensive ability was demonstrated in the forests of the Poreche bridgehead on the Luga in August, 1941.

Partisan operations depend in large measure on the cover of forests. In areas of little forest land, as in the Kuban, there were very few partisans; their area of greatest activity was in the Belorussian forests and swamps. Their camps were usually hidden deep in the forests.

Swamps offer special difficulties, but more than once the Soviets crossed swamps in situations in which the Germans had believed this to be impossible. In winter, when frozen, swamps can be easily crossed, and the Russian log-path system is surprisingly effective in all seasons. In some cases capability exceeded judgment. Thus, in 1944, in Galicia, a battalion commander ordered his men to crawl across a partly frozen swamp at night in a surprise penetration of the hostile rear. By daybreak his unit was across, but was exhausted and cut off from its heavy weapons and the opportunity of reinforcement or withdrawal. The unit was annihilated. But in other cases the Germans were badly surprised by Soviet success in traversing swamps. In early 1944, about 14 divisions advanced 80 miles through the Pripiat marshes to attack Kovel.⁵ In general, the Soviet Army is well prepared for forest and swamp combat.

Mountains and Elevations

The peculiarities of combat in mountainous terrain are recognized, but regular troops are considered quite capable of action in the mountains. The 1940 *Manual for the Operations of Troops in the Mountains* stated: "Of all types of land troops, the infantry possesses the most maneuverability in the mountains, and is least bound to the roads."⁶ The 1943 *Manual for the Operations of Troops in the Mountains* stated that "Field troops can operate anywhere in a mountain theater; but for especially difficult directions it is advantageous to use mountain troops."⁷

In 1946, Lt. General Gastilovich stated that "For the infantry, there do not exist inaccessible places in the mountains."⁸

The German experience showed that *Jaeger* troops had great advantages in dealing with ordinary Soviet field troops in the mountains. The only engagements in mountainous terrain were in the northern Caucasus in 1942 and in the Carpathian mountains in the summer of 1944. Especially in the latter campaign, the Soviets found they could not amass the usual infantry-artillery-tank juggernaut, and vastly superior infantry troops had great difficulty with the specially trained German forces.⁹

Soviet regulations stress envelopment maneuvers in mountain-area advance.¹⁰ As a counterpart, special attention is paid also to flank and rear defense in the mountains.¹¹ Soviet doctrine on mountain warfare recognizes both the importance of and the limitations on mobility. Lt. General Gastilovich stated:

The action of advancing troops is usually dispersed along the several auto roads, each of which is an operational direction.

The direction of the main blow must basically correspond to a good automobile road.¹²

He wrote that the tempo of an offensive, “according to the experience of the Fatherland War,” could rise to 10 kilometers per hour or to 25 kilometers in pursuit following the breakthrough, depending on “the degree of destruction of the roads and the speed of their reestablishment.”¹³

Postwar doctrine has modified the role of cavalry in mountain operations, and currently the use of cavalry is advised only up to regimental force. Mechanized and tank formations (divisions) are not considered useful for development of a breakthrough in mountainous terrain. Medium tank battalions are assigned to rifle formations for close support in the mountains.¹⁴

The use of artillery, especially in direct-fire roles, is considered very important. As Gastilovich stated, “Artillery in the mountains is echeloned not only in depth, but also in altitude.”¹⁵ No references are made to the use of rear-slope artillery positions.

In discussing the importance of close support by attack aviation in mountain operations, Lt. General Gastilovich stated:

The complexity of meteorological conditions, the difficulty of orientation, the complexity of aerial maneuver by attack planes (at low altitudes) and dive bombers, the limited quantity of convenient airdromes and landing fields, all bear on the peculiarities of aviation action in the mountains.

Concentrated and consecutive blows of aviation in the main direction can replace the shock action of tanks, the use of which is limited.¹⁶

The *Manual for the Operations of Troops in the Mountains* states that dive-bombing is frequently used.¹⁷

Gastilovich emphasized the particular value of airborne troops in the mountains. He stated that “Wide use can be made of aerial descent (especially paratroop), acting in combined action with ground troops. They

are used for diversionary aims, and for the seizure of bases, defiles, etc., not occupied by the enemy.”¹⁸

The Soviets recognize that immediate reserves acquire exceptional importance in mountainous terrain, where formations must be more, self-sufficient. Accordingly, “In army, corps, and divisional levels it is necessary to maintain a strong reserve (up to one-third of the total), with tanks and self-propelled artillery.” Further, “Reserves are expediently deployed at auto crossroads, disposed for swift dispatch in [any] necessary direction.”¹⁹

Special light infantry divisions are prepared particularly for mountain combat, but Soviet doctrine continues to stress that regular troops are adequately prepared. In practice this may be in the process of modification, on the basis of the limited and not very successful experience in the Caucasus and the Carpathians. The regular Soviet infantry troops are probably at least as well prepared for mountain combat as the regular troops of any other major power.

There is a keen awareness of the value of high ground in tactical combat in all terrain theaters. The wartime *Theses on Offensive Combat* stated that in a breakthrough of the enemy defenses,

*The objectives of the action, will as a rule, be the commanding heights, the taking of which deprives the enemy of observation, of a favorable firing position, cuts firing communications from neighboring support points, and for the offense, on the other hand, secures wide possibilities....*²⁰

While this is a usual military objective, German reports indicate that the Soviets may have overvalued tactical elevations. One high German source stated:

There was just one *tactical misconception* which the Russians could not relinquish despite all losses; the belief that an elevation was in every case the only terrain feature of value. They tried for every elevation, fought for it with perseverance and strong forces, no matter whether or not it actually dominated the terrain and the situation demanded its possession. If the elevation was really important, it was well to occupy it before the Russians; otherwise, it was to be expected that the elevation could be taken only with heavy losses....²¹

To one familiar with Bolshevik political thought, this immediately provokes strong recollection of the importance in Bolshevism accorded to “the commanding heights” in any situation, which approximates “the main link.” Defensively, they are the minimum safeguard; offensively, the essential vantage point for launching the offensive.

Steppes and Desert

Steppe and desert country, of course, require an intensified use of certain qualities of usual level-country combat.²² Maneuver, mobility, and speed acquire decisive importance. Accordingly, mobile forces are primary, but are limited by availabilities of fuel and water. Aviation has increased opportunities for reconnaissance and attack because of the lack of defensive cover, and airborne troops also have wider opportunities. Defensively, antitank and antiair security occupy an important role—a lesson learned in the Khalkhin-Gol operation (1939) and in the Italo-Abyssinian war (1936).²³

The only Soviet experience in semi-arid flat terrain in the Soviet-German war was in the Kuban area, where Soviet mobile formations failed to make full use of their potentialities. The Soviet horse cavalry was particularly adapted to combat in steppe terrain, in view of the lack of an equivalent German force. Also, camel troops are maintained by the Mongolian Peoples' Republic and in smaller number by the Soviets in Central Asia. They participated in the battle for Stalingrad in the steppes to the south.

Heavily Populated Places

Soviet military doctrine and practice recognizes the peculiar features of combat in cities and other heavily populated areas. From the Soviet point of view, one of the most important peculiarities is the necessity for diversified but coordinated command and initiative. The 1942-1945 *Infantry Combat Regulations* repeated prewar doctrine:

Battle for a populated place usually dissolves into a series of separate local fights for control of bases and centers of defense.

Battle for a populated place is conducted with close combined action of troops acting within the populated place.

An offensive for a populated place is usually distinguished by embarrassment of observation and firing, complexity of command direction, and limited opportunities for maneuver.^{24*}

* This is similar to U.S. Army doctrine. The *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, states: "The action within the town necessarily is decentralized to subordinate infantry leaders since lack of observation of the action precludes satisfactory centralized control. The attack is pushed rapidly through

the town to capture quickly the exits on the far side. Assault units are freed from the responsibility of mopping up the town.” (See FM 100-5, 1944, p. 247, par. 856.)

Although we shall not discuss combat in villages in any detail, we ought in passing to note the tactical importance of inhabited places. In the winter in particular, they offered warm quarters and access to the few roads cleared of snow, basic prerequisites for winter warfare. In all seasons the Soviets showed their ability, when on the defensive, to fortify even small villages effectively. In the offensive, contested villages (as well as cities) were often encircled before being captured.

During the Soviet-German war, the Soviets usually avoided direct assault on populated places in favor of their encirclement and isolation. Following encirclement, active assaults aimed at splitting the city into small areas which could then be more easily annihilated in detail were more frequent than sieges. Infantry, with tank and mortar and artillery support, would clear the area house by house, street by street.

Similarly, in defense the Soviets would concentrate forces on both sides of the city to prevent its encirclement. The local population was mobilized into active military service. All efforts were made to prevent the enemy from splitting the defenders and to force him into an extremely costly house-to-house struggle, during which the Soviets would amass reserves for a decisive counterblow on the flanks of the populated area. Stalingrad is the model example of such defense.

Once the city was encircled, it was divided into areas which were assigned to reinforced battalions or regiments (in Stalingrad, even to divisions). Most of the following discussion of street fighting is taken from a monograph by General Chuikov on “Street Fighting—The Lessons of Stalingrad.”^{[25](#)}

Shock groups were formed to storm enemy positions and then to use them as strongholds. As General Chuikov wrote, “An offensive inside a city consists in the storming of fortified houses and other structures which the enemy has turned into firing points, strong points, or centers of resistance.”^{[26](#)} The shock groups spearheaded the assault on these points and were followed by larger units. The shock group itself included one or more assault squads, a reinforcement (consolidation) group, and reserves. According to General Chuikov, the assault squads were very small (six to eight men) and were lightly armed (grenades, submachine guns, daggers, and shovels). Upon

entering the objective (building), they notified (usually by rocket) the more heavily armed reinforcement group, including engineers, which followed. (The armament of the latter group included mortars, machine guns, antitank guns, and explosives.) The commander of the assault group commanded the reinforcement group as well. These shock groups were *ad hoc* groupings.

General Chuikov stated that the correct infantry tactic was to throw grenades and then to follow them. Artillery and tank support by small direct-fire units was expected for reinforced fire. Artillery preparation preceded the assault only in large or open areas. Darkness and smoke screens were both utilized for the assault. To provide for intercommunication, trenches were dug and cellars and rooms were connected; even sewers were used for this purpose. Solid buildings were connected by holes in the walls. Snipers were widely used to keep the enemy under cover and to kill his commanders and reconnaissance scouts. The Soviet Army has large numbers of trained snipers. Tanks and self-propelled guns were used in the storm group and also held as reserve to stop enemy counterattacks.²⁷

The “feel” of this street-and-house combat is well caught in Konstantin Simonov’s fictionalized account of the battle for Stalingrad, the novel *Days and Nights*.²⁸

Rivers and Water Barriers

Rivers and other bodies of water may be used as a means of movement, or may be a water barrier [*vodnaia peregrada*] either for defense or to assist in an advance.²⁹ The chief rivers of Russia almost all run longitudinally, increasing greatly their significance as barriers. Neither the Red Army in 1941-1942 nor the *Wehrmacht* in 1944-1945 was able to make full use of the defensive potentialities of these rivers. This was not due to a lack of doctrinal recognition on the part of the Soviets, but to the general Soviet failure to have prepared an organized and planned defense; in the German retreat it was due to lack of manpower.

The river and lake flotillas, under the command of the navy, cooperated with the Red Army in its operations.

We have noted before the strong Soviet pressure on gaining bridgeheads. Airborne forces may be used, on the opposite shore, for aid in gaining a bridgehead, as at Kanev in crossing the Dnepr in 1943. When an assault is required, the operation is an amphibious assault in miniature or, by Soviet standards, a full-scale amphibious operation. Bridges are thrown up at once, usually from local timber.

In forcing a river, great care is given to advance reconnaissance, planning, concentration of superior forces and strong firepower, surprise, speed, and multiple crossings (including false ones). Armored units are sent ahead of the main body of advancing troops to seize the bridgehead. Quick assault is mandatory. Crossings may be made at night. Great stress is laid on carrying through any crossing, once undertaken. According to Major General Isayev, “Operations of contemporary mass armies concerned with forcing strong water barriers are *the most difficult* of operations, demanding of the commander a special ability.”³⁰

In the Soviet-German war, the Germans were often surprised by multiple-crossing attempts before it was believed that adequate Soviet forces had arrived.³¹ Usually, after a long offensive advance, the Soviets would permit the Germans to regroup behind a river barrier while they themselves consolidated their gains; but in almost all cases, at least one bridgehead was first secured and maintained as the *place d’armes* for the next offensive.

Winter and Arctic Conditions

Soviet doctrine emphatically states that all types of troops are capable of action in winter. The 1943 General Staff study, *Peculiarities of the Operations of Troops in the Winter*, repeated prewar doctrine that “Combat in winter conditions is conducted on the same bases as in any other time of the year. All types of troops participate in winter combat.”³² The special requirements of winter or arctic combat are well recognized. The 1939 *Manual for the Action of Troops in Winter Conditions* states the fundamental special factors of winter warfare as being cold, deep snow, frozen terrain, and short days.³³ Other elements not mentioned, such as lack

of vegetational cover and decreased visibility due to meteorological conditions, are not in practice ignored.

It is important to distinguish between the phases of winter or, more properly, of snow level. The experience of the Finnish wars suggests that while the Soviet Army is very good in operations in light snow, it is at a disadvantage in heavy snow, relative to other well-trained and conditioned arctic troops.

The Russian “General Winter” has been recognized as a powerful factor for many decades; the Soviets are fully aware of this advantage. The former Imperial major general, Svechin, considered the winter to have been decisive in defeating Napoleon, and he reminded the Soviets of its great importance.³⁴ The noted Soviet historian of the Napoleonic war, Tarle, has recently been criticized for according too important a role to winter and vast spaces in the defeat of the invading *Grande Armee*.³⁵ Such political valuations do not alter the operational or tactical doctrine of the Soviet Army.

The 1939 *Manual for the Operations of Troops in Winter Conditions* opened with the statement that

The Red Army possesses all the advantages over the armies of other states in relation to practice and ability to operate in the harsh conditions of the winter period. These advantages flow from the geographic conditions of the USSR with its cold latitude climatic belt, from the rich military-historical experience and better equipment of the Red Army for winter operations.³⁶

The practice of the Soviet-German war revealed that this was largely true; the experience of the Finnish “Winter War” of 1939–1940 showed that this claim was not justified in all areas sharing the northern Russian latitudes.

Because of their superior ability in coping with winter conditions, the Soviets frequently prepared their offensives for winter: at Moscow in the winter of 1941–1942; at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942–1943; in the Kiev area in the winter of 1943–1944; and across the North German Plain in the great offensive of January, 1945.

Basic tactical formations and plans remain the same and are adapted to winter conditions. During the war trenches were prepared before an assault as close as possible to the enemy positions and were cleared of snow, and attacking troops ran along them, leaving them for the open snow at the last possible minute. Mobility is greatly hampered by winter snow and cold. During the war the Soviets made wide use of ski troops, and artillery was

mounted on runners; but—much more significant—ordinary armor was maintained so that it could operate in winter. Supply by sled and by air was successful. Ski units were used for reconnaissance, infiltration and flank attacks, and liaison. For limited periods of time, cavalry proved useful where mechanized or armored formations could not be used.

Standard Soviet aircraft were considered adequate for operations in winter and in the arctic, and special maintenance kept them in combat condition. Their action was, of course, restricted by the less favorable meteorological conditions of winter weather. Col. General Sokolov, who commanded Soviet arctic aviation during the war, declared: “The materiel of our aviation, its aircraft, armament and equipment, our tactics and organization of all forms of aviation, is entirely usable in any theater of military actions, and is victorious everywhere, including in extreme climatic conditions of the high latitudes.”³⁷

In winter, aviation is hampered both by poor flying weather and by poor visibility in reconnaissance or attack missions. Lack of protective vegetational cover can be counterbalanced by good camouflage, and the changed and largely invisible features of the terrain when heavily blanketed in snow make both location of the target and orientation in general very difficult.³⁸ Winter camouflage is highly developed in the Soviet Army and is combined with the other measures for winter warfare discussed in this chapter. Tanks, artillery, trucks, and aircraft are painted white, and troops (especially ski troops, scouts, and front-line troops) wear white uniforms. The shorter daylight hours of the winter season lead to more extensive night operation, often with relatively small forces.

Major General Ishchenko, in his book *Reconnaissance in Winter*, concludes that “Under winter conditions the means of action of all reconnaissance organs remain the same as in other times of the year, but the techniques of action and tactical methods have certain peculiarities.”³⁹ As we have seen in our discussion of reconnaissance, the need for conducting active reconnaissance at all times of the year and under all conditions is fully recognized.

The main winter condition is the cold. The Russians, being habituated to living in the Russian winter, have developed means of combating the cold which are readily adaptable to military action. During the war the Russians showed themselves much better adapted to winter combat than the other

Soviet peoples from the Ukraine, Caucasus, and Central Asia and than their German and Central European adversaries.

The problems of overcoming cold are clear, if not simple of solution. Wounds or weariness can lead to fatal sleep; movement is hampered if clothing is adequate. Simple firing of infantry small arms becomes difficult with heavily padded clothing and gloves. The cavalryman's legs are inactive and hence are susceptible to frostbite or freezing. The tankist or artilleryman has a problem in handling metal ordnance.⁴⁰ Cold is combated by careful preparation and discipline. Troops are kept under shelter when possible, semipermanent positions are heated by stoves, warming posts are established in rest and communication centers along the front, and casualty clearing stations are situated well forward to facilitate recovery of the wounded. Soviet troops dig shelters and build snow walls and snow bunkers. Finally, warm clothing is issued, including felt boots [*valenki*] and a quilted uniform. Frostbite is considered to be avoidable, and soldiers and their officers are often punished for its occurrence.

The individual Soviet soldier, just like any other, must face the many problems of winter combat. His army prepares him well with training, discipline, and adequate winter-proven equipment. The German army failed to prepare its men as well. Any army can prepare adequately, but the experience of successful adjustment under conditions of modern warfare remains a Soviet advantage.

Night

Night actions are considered in Soviet doctrine to be a usual form of combat. In 1936, the *Field Regulations* stated that "*Night operations of troops are usual in contemporary conditions*" a statement repeated in all subsequent regulations.⁴¹ In an article in 1946, Col. General Kuznetsov declared that

The projected *Field Regulations*, 1944 edition, states that in offensive battles night can be utilized in the aims of seizing bases in the advance region of the enemy defense for securing the development of the attack in daylight, development in depth of defense of successes gained in the day, a regrouping of forces and means in the course of a battle, the conduct of reconnaissance, raids, concealed flanking of the enemy and entering his rear.⁴²

Marches, transfers of troops, and withdrawals are usually effected at night.⁴³ The Soviets fully understand the importance of surprise, initiative, simplicity, and careful preparation in night operations.⁴⁴

Objectives are generally limited as well as carefully prepared. During the war night offensives on a major scale were rare and sometimes acts of desperation, as, for example, was the night tank battle at Kharkov in the summer of 1943- On the other hand, the night raid across the Vistula on November 16, 1944, was successful. Successful local night actions were frequent, especially in development of advances begun during the day or for purposes of infiltration. For example, General Haider noted in December, 1941, that "The Russians attack during the night, and turn up behind our positions at the break of day."⁴⁵ Some successful night offensives of considerable size, but of limited objective, were the taking of Bzhuz, the battle of Edlinsk, the battle for the river Bart, and the battle for the Obra.⁴⁶

As the 1940 *Field Regulations* stated: "The infantry plays the main role in a night offensive."⁴⁷ Soviet doctrine on the role of artillery at night is not clear. The 1944 *Field Regulations* said that "artillery preparation is usually not conducted at night."⁴⁸ Soviet experience in the war on a number of occasions included the successful use of artillery preparation at night. Examples of artillery action cited by Soviet enthusiasts include the Gomel front in 1941, at Stalingrad in 1942, at Vitebsk in the spring of 1944, at Ionchatel in October, 1944, and at Plessien in February, 1945. Col. General Kuznetsov argued that the 1944 *Regulations* should be changed on this point.⁴⁹ In small numbers supporting infantry, tanks were successfully used at night on a number of occasions.

Both during the crossing of the Oder and in the battle for Berlin, massed searchlights shining from the flanks and rear of the attacking troops were used at night. They illuminated the path of the attackers and also blinded the defenders.⁵⁰

Aircraft are occasionally used in combined action with troops at night, but their main actions at that time are independent. Night interception of hostile attack is, of course, necessary. During the war attack aviation did not usually operate at night and nor did light bombers. When used, their performance was not good, and efforts to correct the prevailing lack of skill in night flying in these aviation arms are presently being made. Long-range (ADD) bombing was usually conducted at night.

In general, Soviet troops made a good showing in night action, with the possible exception of aviation, which is now remedying this defect.

CHAPTER 23

SOVIET EMPLOYMENT OF

PARTISAN FORCES

Partisan Warfare in Soviet Strategy

Partisan warfare is deeply imbedded in the Marxist approach to military doctrine. In the Marxian conception of the struggle of the proletariat against their capitalist exploiters, it was implicit that this struggle be waged without regular armies and clearly defined fronts, and that it be carried on totally, by classes, in civil war.¹

Like other aspects of Marxian theory, this approach to partisan warfare was tested in the Bolshevik Revolution and subsequent Civil War. The formation of a centralized, highly disciplined control and command by professional revolutionaries, inherent in Bolshevism (although not in the class struggle), shaped the character of this struggle increasingly toward the formation of regular armies of the proletarian class, as well as of the imperialist-exploiter class. Whereas regular armies had been condemned as organs of state suppression, the dictatorship of the proletariat in turn required such an organ to suppress the remaining exploiters. As we have seen, the conflict among the revolutionaries concerning the choice between a regular army or guerrilla partisan formations was decided in favor of relying on a regular army.

Partisan warfare was not, however, renounced. Even adherents of a disciplined regular army and opponents of the *partizanshchina* remained very much aware of the potentialities of partisan irregular combat in countries and situations in which a more strictly controlled armed force was

not possible or practicable. Such movements were considered as arising from the revolt of “the people” against their exploiters. Frunze saw as second only to “education in the spirit of offensive maneuver” the need for “preparation for conducting partisan warfare in the territories of possible theatres of military activities. Again the experience of our Civil War gives very rich material in this regard.”² He concluded:

Therefore one of the tasks of our General Staff must be working out the ideas of “little war” [*malaia voina*] partisan warfare] in its application to our future wars with an enemy technologically superior to us.³

An important part will be played by partisan operations, which should be prepared for action on a large scale, and certain army units should be educated systematically in the spirit of such operations.⁴

Others, notably Tukhachevsky, favored concentration on a regular army even for the world revolution, although not to the exclusion of irregular military operations. In his famous letter to Zinoviev of July 18, 1920, he stated: “The Communist International must prepare for the coming Civil War from a military point of view, for the moment of the worldwide attack by all the armed forces of the proletariat on worldwide armed capitalism.”⁵ He later suggested (on January 14, 1921) in a letter to the Comintern the creation of a regular international Red Army in Soviet Russia to facilitate indigenous class uprisings elsewhere.⁶ But also, despite his great disdain for partisans in situations in which a regular army was feasible, he admitted that “By organizing uprisings and partisan actions in the rear of the enemy we also create a favorable relation of forces.”⁷

The importance of partisan warfare was not lost on the many Soviet commanders who could say, “In the beginning of the Civil War we were all partisans....”⁸

To omit at least cursory comparison with other historical instances of guerrilla or partisan warfare would, however, be misleading. Miksche, for example, stresses Marx’ recognition of this one form of struggle as though it were its chief origin. The very important prior role of guerrilla warfare in Spain and later in Russia against Napoleon must not be overlooked, nor the decisive importance of guerrilla warfare in Yugoslavia and China in World War II. Such warfare is closely tied to peasant country and wooded terrain. The Warsaw uprising shows the impotency of a city “partisan” action, if unsupported. Accounts of liaison and supply to partisans, Soviet and other,

must not obscure the fact that the basic food supply of partisans has always been provided by the countryside.

The important innovation in Soviet partisan warfare in the Soviet-German war was the strict degree of centralized command and control of the scattered field forces in occupied areas. This contribution to the art of partisan warfare was more totalitarian than Marxian.

Partisans do not play a role central in importance in Soviet military doctrine, but they are considered to be a valuable auxiliary of the regular Soviet Army in areas beyond its effective reach.

Partisans are used, on a wide scale, on the following missions:

- 1) To harass military objectives in the enemy rear—interdiction of supply and communication centers and channels, destruction of supplies, etc.;
- 2) To provoke the enemy to more harsh occupation policies, thus increasing general popular disaffection with the occupation;
- 3) To render auxiliary assistance in the rear to regular army operations;
- 4) To gather intelligence;
- 5) To tie down hostile forces in a diversionary manner;
- 6) To promote the propaganda value of indications of popular support at heroic sacrifices;
- 7) To portray a visible means of retribution on collaborators or potential collaborators with the occupier;
- 8) To conduct pro-Soviet propaganda in the occupied areas.

Those missions dealing with active military operations will be discussed later, but it should be noted here that not all the functions are strictly military.

Not until the 1944 *Field Regulations* were issued did Soviet army regulations have an explicit doctrine on partisan warfare.* In these regulations a chapter was introduced explaining that “The partisan movement is the armed struggle of the popular masses in temporarily occupied territories, against foreign usurpers, in defense of their motherland and independence.”^{9*}

* Soviet prewar expectations regarding the nature of the next war placed considerable importance on the assistance of friendly elements in the enemy’s rear, but as enemy advance over the Soviet Union was not anticipated, the local Soviet populace was *not* foreseen as the main source of recruitment for partisan forces. Similarly, in a true offensive war, the Red Army was expected to participate in such operations only to the extent of deputing special agents and making use of local guerrilla elements.

* The Soviet regulations tend to consider partisan warfare as being conducted largely by indigenous civilian personnel, although they stress coordination; the 1944 *U.S. Field Service Regulations, Operations*, in its section on partisan warfare, tends to consider such operations as being conducted by small special regular army units. (See FM 100-5, p. 384, par. 973.)

Quite apart from the Marxian overtones or inspirations to struggle by all means available, Russian history has several precedents of popular participation in guerrilla warfare, notably in 1812.^{[10](#)} Some times the Soviets even go back to earlier Russian history for parallels. As one partisan exhorted: “So let us smite the enemy and smite him mercilessly, as did our grandfathers and great grandfathers before us, who smashed for long years the desire of the Teutonic Knights to invade our Russian soil.”^{[11](#)} The Civil War, besides being the most recent parallel, was ideologically the closest. Only one example of an early evaluation of the role played by Red partisans in the Civil War will be cited here:

The partisan movement in the rear of Kolchak had an extraordinary influence on the front and on the outcome of operations in 1919. It disintegrated the [White] army; it undermined the will to victory of its command.

It tore the army from its base, rising in the inhabited places, the supply points in Siberia, cutting them off from the towns and thus isolating the survivors.^{[12](#)}

It is significant that during the recent war, however, the usual comparison was not with the Civil War, stressing as it must the Bolshevik ideology and regime, but with the Fatherland War of 1812, stressing the more popular patriotic symbol, Russia.

[Preparations for Partisan Warfare in World War II](#)

It is generally stated by non-Soviet and Soviet commentators that before the last war the Soviet government had prepared very carefully and in detail the whole framework of partisan activities. There is considerable evidence that this assumption is not correct, despite the interest of the Soviets in partisan warfare. Maneuvers of 1940 which the Germans have reported as being partisan preparation were actually regular army training; it is quite true that small-unit action was stressed in 1940, but this was because of the low

level of performance on company, battalion, and regimental levels in the Finnish war. Interrogations and conversations indicate that most, at least, of the Red Army units were *not* especially prepared or trained for partisan activities prior to the war.

On July 3, 1941, Stalin called for the formation of partisan units to harass the Germans. He ordered that

In areas occupied by the enemy, partisan units, mounted and on foot, must be formed, diversionary groups must be organized to combat enemy units, to foment partisan warfare everywhere, to blow up bridges and roads, damage telephone and telegraph lines and set fire to forests, stores and transports. In occupied regions conditions must be made unbearable for the enemy and his accomplices. They must be harassed and attacked at every step, and all their measures frustrated.^{[13](#)}

It is clear from the memoir accounts of the chief partisan leaders that this was a surprise, and that prewar preparation had, in fact, been almost entirely lacking. One of them, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Secretary of the entire Chernigov Regional [*Oblast*] Committee of the Party, A. F. Fyodorov, led the important partisan detachment in the Chernigov and Volhynia regions. He gave some important clues to the type and extent of prewar preparations: “What amazed me was that the Central Committee had already mapped out the entire organizational scheme of an underground movement.”^{[14](#)} He was an important Party Chief and the head of the future partisan detachment for the area, and yet he was “amazed” to learn this; moreover, even after the outbreak of war this alleged master plan was not unveiled at once. He reported:

Before Comrade Stalin’s radio address of July 3, 1941, nobody in the region had done anything to prepare a Bolshevik underground movement, to organize partisan detachments. And I must confess that I had not thought about that either.^{[15](#)}

On my arrival in Chernigov I called a meeting of the R. C. [Party Regional Committee] bureau. My announcement that an underground movement was to be organized came like a bolt from the blue to them.^{[16](#)}

One evidence of lack of detailed advance planning and preparation was the relatively weak partisan effort in the first year of the war.

After the war had begun, and especially after Stalin’s speech of July 3, preparations were begun seriously, and in some localities much was done. Fyodorov told what was done in preparation in July and August, 1941:

The Central Committee of the Party demanded that we members of the R. C. make thorough preparations. We had to provide for every detail, including the everyday needs of the partisans-to-be.

The future partisan commanders were already attending special courses where they were taught to blow up bridges, fire tanks, steal German staff documents. They had already taken leave of their families, while the underground Party workers had taken leave of their real names as well; they trained themselves not to respond when hailed by their old names.^{[17](#)}

Fyodorov and others to be quoted below claim that the Party was responsible for forming most of these units, and selection was made by local Party leaders. In practice we know this was not typical. Soviet propaganda of course claims Party leadership in the organization of such groups, and in these specific (outstanding but not typical) publicized cases this may well have been true. According to former partisans now in the West, the majority of partisan units arose spontaneously and later were usually taken over by Party officials, since the latter were the only ones able to effect arrangements for supply (and guidance) from Moscow.^{[18](#)}

Ignatov, the leader of the leading partisan detachment of the Kuban, recorded the formation and preparation of his unit (well after the outbreak of the war) as follows:

The unit must not be too large. I think it would be unwise to have more than fifty or sixty men. At the same time our operations will be extremely varied. Therefore the men must be proficient in various departments. Those who can handle only one weapon must learn to handle others, and German weapons at that, because our chief source of supplies in the hills will come from the enemy.

After thinking about this a great deal, sizing all the men up and taking counsel with Eugene, we at last, sorting out our friends as one sorts cards in a game of patience, drew up a preliminary list. Then we carefully discussed each candidate, struck out some, added others, and finally obtained a unit which, on the whole, is not so bad, in my opinion; we shall even have an airman.

Nobody in Krasnodar knows as yet that we are going on partisan operations. All our friends and colleagues believe that we have been mobilized for the Red Army, and all of us have been supplied with call-up notices from the Krasnodar Military Commissariat. If anybody meets us on our way to the hills we shall say that we are a survey party out to survey the site for a large lumber mill which is to be erected later on. This excuse will also serve in case we are intercepted by German outposts. We have made all arrangements for this. Every member of the unit knows the place he or she is supposed to hold in the survey party and can unhesitatingly answer any questions concerning the size of the supposed lumber mill, its site and the main particulars about the plan of construction. It goes without saying that I have all the necessary documents, signed and sealed, to testify to the truth of our story.^{[19](#)}

Another leading partisan commander, S. A. Kovpak, who was made a major general for his exploits, reported as follows on the preparations (after

Stalin's speech) for his unit²⁰:

We listened to a short report on decisions taken by the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine following Comrade Stalin's broadcast. The speech called for the creation of partisan groups in all districts of the Ukraine which were threatened by the enemy's invasion; for sending comrades to the regional committee of the Party at Sumy for a course in handling mines; and laying foundations in the forests for partisan bases with provisions, arms, explosives. The importance attached by the Party to this work was already clear to us from the fact that Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev [of the Politburo] himself was to lead the partisan movement in the Ukraine.

Next day began the preparations for the setting up of partisan bases.²¹

It has often been claimed, especially by German writers, that the *Osoaviakhim* was an organization especially designed for sabotage and partisan work. This is not entirely true; but it is likely, of course, that paramilitary training of this type proved very useful, as partisan sources state.²²

Preparations and tactical operations were guided by *The Partisans Handbook*, published in Moscow beginning in 1942 and widely disseminated, which contained guides on partisan tactics, Soviet and enemy weapons and explosives, German antipartisan tactics, first aid, etc.

It should be noted that the preparations described and other accounts of action by the partisan groups are not quite typical; rather, they were the most successful ones. German accounts (and the accounts of former Soviet observers of the occupation) stress that the first six months to one year of the occupation saw very little partisan activity; indeed, the accounts of the partisan leaders quoted above also bear this out. Aside from the action of isolated groups of Soviet soldiers wandering about in the German rear (many of whom later joined partisan groups), this region was relatively tranquil during this early period. Later the harsh German occupation policy toward the populace (usually policies of the administrative officers rather than of the combat units) made itself felt, and, as the tide of battle turned, the partisan detachments grew. In addition to the party officials who had remained behind to form such groups, the Red Army officers and soldiers who escaped from early encirclements but could not get to the front and the increasing numbers of disaffected civilians formed the bulk of the detachments.* This statement is supported by Soviet accounts. Ponomarenko, a Secretary of the Central Committee and chief of staff of partisan activities, declared that "With each day that passed the nation-wide guerrilla movement grew and developed.

The ranks of the people's avengers became more numerous, the detachments multiplied and the people's struggle against the invaders increased in extent and intensity."²³ And as one partisan stated:

From the outset of the invasion of Ukrainian territory by the German aggressors, guerrillas began operating in their rear. At first the movement was spasmodic; the people killed German soldiers who had become separated from their units, captured columns of carts and from time to time raided the smaller garrisons. Later a regular guerrilla army fought in the rear of the Germans, an army that had gained military experience, had first-class commanders and could strike really effective blows at the enemy.²⁴

And not only patriotic-ideological motives are admitted by the Soviets themselves:

Not a few of Bogdan's guerrillas are Soviet citizens whom the Germans tried to drive off to slave labor in Germany, but who succeeded in escaping...²⁵

There was not one person there [in a particular partisan detachment] in whose family blood had not been shed. If it was an old man—then the Germans had murdered his daughters; a young man—the Germans had killed his mother and father. These people had no homes. They shared the forest which took the place of a home. These people had no families. Yet they were all of one family—the guerrilla detachment. They were fired with one desire—to kill Germans.²⁶

* An additional source, of not much importance in the last war, is the passing over to partisan activities of airborne troops who have no means of returning to the lines. They are required by their regulations to do this.

It is often not realized that the partisans usually lived in permanent or semipermanent camps and in most instances did not melt back to their homes after an engagement. In these camps detachment newspapers were printed, and radio broadcasts were received from Moscow and the unoccupied Soviet Union (called "the mainland" or "the great land," the partisan territory being "islands"). "Political work" and propaganda were carried on extensively, the workers being supplied with pamphlets, newspapers, and material from Moscow by radio and by air.²⁷

Much of the partisan equipment and supplies were seized from the German occupiers, supplemented by "requisitions" from the occupied natives and special supplies sent to the partisans by air. Indeed, German weapons and supplies were often preferred because

Partisan Organization and Command Channels

The partisan detachments were necessarily limited in size, and it was a principle of their tactics to avoid direct open engagements and to limit themselves to swift harassing actions. Accordingly they were often independent bands, “detachments” [*otriadi*] or “battalions,” of 50 to 400 men, in some cases loosely bound into “brigades” of 500 to 5000 (especially during the winter). Kovpak indicated the general pattern of organization in a large unit or brigade:

We came to the conclusion that our tactics should be based on the cooperation of independent groups and detachments, subordinated to one headquarters. In this way by grouping around itself the partisans of the neighboring districts the Putivl detachment was able to remain comparatively small and easily maneuverable, and, at the same time, had the possibility of carrying through big operations.

Thus, when a number of partisans from the same district came to us, they were formed into a new battle group, but when this group grew to the size of a detachment we separated it off as an independent fighting unit subordinate to the Putivl detachment only operationally. It was thus that our partisan combination was gradually formed, which was first called the Putivl Combined Detachment, and later, the Sumy Regional Group of partisan detachments.^{[28](#)}

Discipline within these groups was usually strict, as a slip could easily mean death to all, and in the interest of self-preservation high vigilance was secured.^{[29](#)} As a striking example of this discipline, the “partisan oath” of a Belorussian detachment is reproduced below:

I, a citizen of the great Soviet Union, true son of the heroic Byelo-Russian people, promise not to lay down arms until the last Fascist on Byelo-Russian soil is destroyed. I promise unreservedly to obey all orders of my commanders and to observe strict military discipline.

The destruction of our towns and villages, the death of our children, torture, violence and insult to my people I promise to avenge always, mercilessly and without pity. Blood shall be avenged by blood and death by death.

I promise to help the Red Army in every way to destroy the enemy, sparing no efforts nor life itself. I declare that I would sooner die in battle with the enemy than to surrender myself and my family and my people to be slaves of a bloodthirsty Fascism.

Should I, by weakness, cowardice or evil design, violate this oath and betray the interests of my people, may I suffer a shameful death at the hands of my comrades.^{[30](#)}

The men could not usually be told their destination. As Kovpak stated: “It had become a law for our men never to ask where we were going, or what

for, but to rely entirely on the command.”³¹

The centralization of partisan activities was prosecuted vigorously early in the war. A Central Partisan Staff directly under the Central Committee of the Party was set up in Moscow as follows: Marshal Voroshilov of the Politburo, Commander in Chief of the Partisans; Lt. General Ponomarenko (later successor to Voroshilov), a Secretary of the Central Committee, chief of partisan activities in Belorussia; and Khrushchev of the Politburo, chief of partisan activities in the Ukraine. Leading partisan leaders were brought into Moscow by plane for a conference in August, 1942, and talked with Stalin.³² Thus Kovpak’s unit was directed to, and later actually did, march all the way to the Carpathians on orders from Moscow.³³

Although it is seldom recognized, the Soviet leadership did not so much create partisan activity as gain control over spontaneously developing guerrilla groups. Being the only source of special supply needs, it was able to gain control of most partisan groups by parachuting special agents, instructors, political officers, and other command elements plus arranging for air contact and providing radio communication.³⁴

In addition to these partisan groups, there were other diversionary groups in the German rear. Special detachments, usually small in size, of NKGB and Red Army men were sent into the enemy’s rear on special interdiction and intelligence missions. These special detachments were kept apart from the local partisan organizations.

According to available sources, the Red Army did not recognize and exploit the full intelligence value of the partisans until 1942; one explanation is that until that time the Soviet control over them was not completed, and, without reliable agents from the “center” to report, all intelligence data from partisan groups were treated with great reserve. (Even in the more reliable reports, the partisans so exaggerated their successes that evaluation of them in Moscow proved difficult.)

The Germans recognized the importance of the centralized control and direction of the partisan forces. A German report on *Fighting the [Partisan] Bands* stated:

Commitment of the bands takes place as part of the overall operations. In the case of the Bolsheviks [there also were non-Soviet partisans], the bands currently receive their military missions and their political instructions from the centralized band command. Moreover, some bands, especially those in regions near the front, are in direct contact with secondary command posts of the band command such as are found at the military command centers. Furthermore, close contact is

maintained between the illegitimate political organization [underground Communist Party] and the bands.³⁵

Two primary means of command direction and coordination were used: air liaison and radio. Concerning the latter, Marshal Peresypkin declared: “Communications, particularly radio, played an extraordinary role in the organization and leadership of the partisan movement.... The partisan movement needed a united leadership. Coordination of the actions of many partisan detachments was needed.”³⁶

The possibility of using aviation to support partisan units had been foreseen as early as 1922 by at least one Soviet writer.³⁷ During the Soviet-German war, air contact with and supply to partisan units reached a high level of effectiveness. Elaborate systems of signals and concealed partisan landing fields were developed. The main purposes of this air liaison were:

- 1) Coordination from the center (by orders, NKVD and staff officers, agents dropped or landed, sometimes even by flying partisan leaders to Moscow);
- 2) Liaison to facilitate acquisition by the center of intelligence collected by the partisans;
- 3) Supply of materials (weapons, radios, newspapers, political literature, medical supplies, etc.) to the partisans;
- 4) Evacuation of the wounded or of officers who reached partisan units and were wanted in the regular army.

Accordingly several types of aircraft were employed, including U-2 biplanes for courier service and transports of the Civil Air Fleet (GVF) and the Long-range Bomber (ADD) units. The ADD flew a total of 7000 flights in supplying the partisans,³⁸ including flights during 1944 to Tito in Yugoslavia and in support of the Slovak uprising. Liaison officers of the VVS and ADD were attached to the Central Partisan Staff in Moscow. As a rule these air liaison and supply missions were executed at night. They sometimes numbered as many as one-fourth of the total number of air missions flown in the sector.³⁹ The Germans were even forced to admit that in a number of cases “The bands have established their own ground organization for the enemy air force which supplies them; this ground organization includes radio

direction finder, light signal posts and emergency beacon light installations. In their shelter areas they have landing fields.”⁴⁰

The coordination of partisan actions with operations of the regular Red Army took several forms. These actions were usually indirect—e.g., the tying down of German troops—but sometimes they were direct, especially in the later years of the war as the Red Army reoccupied areas of Belorussia and the Ukraine in which the partisans had been operating. One type of cooperation consisted in the engaging of German battle reserves. Thus, one instance of support afforded the defenders of Sevastopol is given below:

A stubborn battle was raging. The Germans had suffered heavy casualties and were expecting replacements to come up any moment. One of the Soviet guerrilla detachments was assigned the task of stopping the enemy from bringing up its reserves. Under cover of the night, the guerrillas quickly concentrated their forces along the main highway.

Waiting until the German trucks packed with soldiers were strung along the mountain road, the guerrillas opened fire. ... In less than half an hour the German infantry battalion had lost three hundred men in killed alone.⁴¹

Another form of direct cooperation lay in flank or rear harassment during the battle. An outstanding example was the defeat of General von Kleist’s *Panzer* divisions at Rostov in November, 1941. While the Red Army was pressing hard on von Kleist’s forces, the partisans harassed his rear and seized part of Rostov. The German High Command communique of November 29 stated: “The troops of occupation in Rostov, according to orders, are evacuating the inner city in order thoroughly to carry out the necessary reprisals against the population, who have illegally taken part in the battle in the rear of the German army.”⁴² General Haider noted in his diary on November 28: “the situation at Rostov has become serious. Enemy has penetrated the city. The population is taking part in the fighting....”⁴³

In 1944, Soviet partisans, with the assistance of infiltrated Red Army troops, conducted such extensive activities in eastern Estonia that the German northern front had to be withdrawn to form a shorter line.⁴⁴ In another notable case, in coordination with the Soviet offensive of June, 1944, in Belorussia, Soviet partisans attempted 15,000 demolitions on the supporting German railways, succeeding in about two-thirds of the attempts. They interrupted all traffic for 24 hours and thus played a significant role in the German forced withdrawal at that time.

Partisan ground actions were often coordinated with Soviet air attacks. This was probably the most usual form of direct coordination of regular and partisan forces, at least until 1944. These attacks were usually against rail junctions, bridges, and similar targets.⁴⁵

Partisan Tactics

Partisan warfare requires a particular orientation of principles differing in their emphases from those of regular combat. Concentration of forces must be replaced by avoidance of pitched battle; strategic reserves do not exist; raids replace battles; and sources of supply are particularly limited. Mobility, maneuver, deception and surprise, night warfare—all of these are heavily accented.

Ponomarenko indicated the importance of surprise and mobility in partisan tactics:

The guerrillas' tactics were based on their link with the population, their perfect knowledge of the situation, movement and general state of the enemy, of the strength of his forces, of his immediate intentions; their tactics were based on maneuverability, knowledge of the locality, the devastating force of the surprise attack, the swift concentration of forces required for striking a powerful blow and the immediate, separate withdrawal of individual units from battle when such a step is required; on the superb mutual support existing between the detachments, and on the heroic, boundless stubbornness of the guerrillas in action. It was these tactics which constituted the strength of the guerrilla formations.⁴⁶

General Kovpak described his conversation with Stalin at the partisan commanders' conference in Moscow (in August, 1942) and Stalin's definition of their tactics:

Comrade Stalin had called ours a raiding detachment. This was perfectly accurate, in this lay the whole essence of our tactics—Stalin had defined it in one concise word.... The scale of our operations was continually extending. At first we had not gone beyond the boundaries of the district, later we raided the whole of the northern part of the Sumy province, and now we had already gone outside the borders of the Sumshchina. So that there was nothing impossible about Comrade Stalin's proposition [i.e., that this detachment move to other regions and ultimately to the Carpathians]. He had simply drawn conclusions from our experience which we could not have reached ourselves, and he was directing us to those places which now, evidently, were the most important. And indeed why should we be circling all the time round our nest in the Sumshchina? After all the superiority of our

tactics of manoeuvre lay in the fact that we had all the time kept the initiative in our hands, that we were able to inflict blows upon the enemy's most vital spots.^{[47](#)}

It is doubtful if Kovpak was so impressed with the genius of Stalin's "definition." Earlier in the same day, according to his own report, he had explained to Stalin why they were a raiding detachment: "After I had answered a series of questions, Comrade Stalin asked me why our detachment had become a raiding detachment. I told of the advantages of actions of manoeuvre in which we had convinced ourselves of our proficiency in battle in the Sumshchina."^{[48](#)}

Partisan tactics necessarily stressed deception, camouflage, and surprise. Partisans were often able, by careful advance reconnaissance and silent night movement, to appear suddenly, seeming much stronger than they were in fact.

The widely distributed *Partisans' Handbook* included a brief discussion of partisan tactics. The following principles were explicitly stated: surprise, close-range action, bravery, initiative in methods of fighting, close ties with the local populace and within the unit, un-ceasing reconnaissance, night operations, a detailed plan made by the commander, and the cutting of hostile communications before attacking.^{[49](#)}

Camouflage was also highly developed, especially individual disguise and group concealment. Partisan camps were usually both inaccessible and carefully camouflaged against detection from the air and ground. The following German statement attests their skill in individual camouflage:

Disguise is another of their ruses. Frequently the band members who are employed for reconnaissance or for requisitioning will wear the uniforms of the German police, the Army, or the SS.

In the field of camouflage the bandits show highest efficiency, especially when it is a matter of hiding. Thus bandits were found standing in water up to their mouths, their heads hidden by pieces of sod; others were found almost completely buried in the ground.^{[50](#)}

Partisan operations were generally of two types: raids or ambushes. The latter were mainly ambushes either of enemy couriers, small units, or command cars; or they were explosive ambushes of trains and truck columns, the column or train being halted and disrupted by mines, at which time the partisans in ambush would open up a murderous crossfire. Usually measures had been taken to ambush possible reinforcements, and several variants of escape by dispersion had been planned.

Antitank tactics were often effective. Combinations of tank pits, ambush volleys of hand grenades, and “fire-bottles” (Molotov cocktails) were used.⁵¹ One account stated: “German tanks are often in a dilemma, because if they move in the open they are spotted by Soviet planes and if they try to conceal themselves in forests they are in danger of attack by guerrillas. More than one case is reported of a German tank column, which had camouflaged itself in a wood, suddenly finding itself ringed with flames. Guerrillas had set fire to the surrounding trees and bushes.”⁵²

In some cases raids were made on major objectives, such as rear headquarters, small garrisons, or airfields. In the case described below, a very small group attacked an airfield:

A guerrilla detachment learned that a German aerodrome had been built near a certain village. During the night sixteen guerrillas made their way to the site. They split up into four groups, each with special duties as follows:—

- (1) Destroy the planes on the ground.
- (2) Blow up the petrol tanks.
- (3) Set fire to the neighboring village containing the headquarters of the German air unit.
- (4) Lay an ambush for any Nazis who attempted pursuit.⁵³

In general, three echelons formed a raiding party: a “combat group,” a “demolition group,” and a “reserve” (which often ambushed pursuers). All raids and ambushes were prepared in advance with meticulous care, which comprised detailed reconnaissance observation (often performed by girls), detailed planning and the allotment beforehand of specific individual tasks, and cautious execution.

In addition to these tactics of military action, further mention must be made of the nonmilitary functions of the Soviet partisans. We know from the accounts of former partisans now in the West that the partisans actively created conditions provoking the Germans to more harsh occupation policy, thus aiding Soviet propaganda. The natives of these occupied regions were themselves victims of partisan foraging, and they also recognized, at least in part, that the German occupation policy was harshened by the partisans’ actions; but in most cases the populace aided the partisans to the extent of not revealing their agents or presence. One reason for this aid was the assassination by the partisans of collaborators and of those who exposed them; another probable reason was that whereas both the Germans and the

partisans were greatly resented, patriotism and fear of Soviet reoccupation favored toleration and nonexposure of the partisans.

The Effectiveness of Partisan Warfare

The partisan movement was centered in Belorussia, occupied Great Russia, and the northern Ukraine, roughly in the area circumscribed by the Vitebsk-Smolensk-Orel-Kiev-Lvov-Brest Litovsk-Minsk line. Aside from some in the Pskov area further north, there were only individual minor bands in all other areas. The reasons for this are mainly physical: the favorable terrain of the Pripiat and Pinsk marshes and forests.

The *Soviet Calendar* for 1947 states that there were a total of 200,000 partisans organized in 2145 groups. The peak of partisan activities was in May-August, 1943; after this the Soviet counter-offensive swept over the chief partisan regions.⁵⁴

It may be stated without exaggeration that partisan warfare proved an effective, "economical" weapon against the Germans. A German rear guard of 100,000 men proved inadequate in Belorussia as early as 1943; and the Germans used perhaps 500,000 collaborating Russians and Ukrainians in counterpartisan operations. The *Soviet Calendar* claims, probably with exaggeration, that in the Ukraine alone 50,000 "Fascist" troops were required to deal with partisans in 1941, 120,000 in 1942, and 424,000 in 1943. The enemy communications by courier and vehicle were so disarranged that airpower had to be diverted to this purpose. Ponomarenko claimed that "The work of the partisans aimed against enemy communications was of outstanding importance in the cause of victory."⁵⁵ Manpower of "limited service" proved inadequate, and combat battalions and even divisions had to be diverted to antipartisan action.* No complete survey of partisan effectiveness for the entire war is available, even in Soviet literature, but Lt. General Ponomarenko, partisan chief of staff in Moscow, made a summary of claimed successes after 2 years of war (before the period of their maximum effectiveness). He said:

In two years of guerrilla warfare in the rear of the German invaders (according to information received) Soviet guerrillas annihilated more than 300,000 invaders, of whom 30 were generals, 6,336

officers and 1,520 airmen. During the same period 3,000 enemy trains were derailed, and 3,263 railway and high-road bridges, 1,191 tanks and armored cars, 476 aeroplanes, 378 guns, 618 staff cars, 4,027 lorries and 895 dumps and warehouses were destroyed....[56](#)

* As early as July 1, 1941, General Haider noted in his diary: "Pacification of the rear areas is a matter of serious concern.... The Security Divisions alone cannot do the job in this vast territory." By November 29, 1941, he recorded reports that "Partisan activity has decreased owing to systematic military action." Later it increased much more, but military action remained the only effective counteraction. Counterpartisan security troops after August, 1942, were under the Operations Section (Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," August 5, 1942).

As a counterpoint in conclusion, it should be mentioned that many of these partisan bands succumbed to the temptations of bandit life or became ideologically alienated, and they continued partisan activities against the Soviets when the Red Army had reoccupied their particular regions.

APPENDIX I

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE

SOVIET ARMED FORCES

The general place of the armed forces in the Soviet governmental structure is diagramed in the chart on page 417. Since February, 1950, the Ministry of War [*Voennoe Ministerstvo*; VM] and the Ministry of the Navy [*Ministerstvo Voennno-Morskogo Flota* MVMF] have been independent of one another. Prior to 1946, they had been included in the Peoples' Commissariat of Defense [*Narodnyi Kommissariat Oborony*, NKO], and from February, 1946, to February, 1950, in the Ministry of the Armed Forces [*Ministerstvo Vooruzhen-rtykh Sil*; MVS].*

* In March, 1953, after this book had gone to press, the Ministry of War and the Ministry of the Navy were again merged in a single Ministry of Defense [*Ministerstvo Oborony*, MO] under Marshal Nikolai Bulganin.

From June 30, 1941, to September 19, 1945, a State Defense Committee [*Gosudarstvennyi Komitet Oborony* GKO], comprised of five to eight of the members of the Politburo headed by Stalin, replaced the *Sovnarkom* ("Council of Peoples' Commissars") as the direct authority over all Commissariats engaged in defense work.† Directly under it was the GHQ [or *Stavka*], a select personal staff of twelve to fourteen top military leaders including the Chief of Staff, which advised the commander in chief, Marshal of the Soviet Union Stalin‡

† Originally the five members were Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Malenkov, and Beria. Later Kaganovich, Voznesensky, and Mikoyan were added, and Bulganin replaced Voroshilov.

‡ See Chapter 13, "The High Command and *Stavka* pp. 192ff.

Stalin served as Peoples' Commissar of Defense (after February, 1946, as Minister of the Armed Forces) from July, 1941, to March, 1947. Upon his

resignation, Marshal Nikolai Bulganin, a political figure and his deputy, replaced him. Bulganin remained as Minister until he was succeeded in March, 1949, by his first deputy, Marshal Alexander Vasilevsky, the incumbent Minister.*

* Following Stalin's death in March, 1953, Marshal Bulganin again assumed the post of Minister of War (now Defense), with Marshals Vasilevsky and Zhukov named as First Deputy Ministers.

Marshal Boris Shaposhnikov, former Imperial General Staff colonel and Chief of Staff in 1919–1920 and from 1927 to 1931, was again in that post from May, 1937, until his final retirement in November, 1942 (except for a brief retirement while General Kyril Meretskov held the post from August, 1940, to February, 1941, and General Grigory Zhukov held it from February to October, 1941). His resignation, owing to severe illness, brought into that post his protege and pupil, General (since then Marshal) Alexander Vasilevsky. Duties on the *Stavka* and as its representative at the front caused Vasilevsky, like Zhukov, to be away for long periods, during which his deputy, General A. E. Antonov, was for all practical purposes the Chief of Staff. In 1945 Antonov was Chief of Staff, while Vasilevsky prepared and directed the Far Eastern campaign. Upon his return, Vasilevsky resumed his position as Chief of Staff from March, 1946, until November, 1948. As noted above, in March, 1949, he was appointed to his present post as Minister of War.* Army General Sergei Shtemenko succeeded Vasilevsky as Chief of Staff and remained in that post until February, 1953, when he was replaced by Marshal Sokolovsky. Shtemenko, even more than Vasilevsky, was a relatively junior officer for appointment to this position; he is believed to be a protege of Vasilevsky's.

Ground Forces[†]

[†] For detailed accounts of the arms, see Chapter 19, pp. 299ff.

The Soviet Army was originally termed the RKKa, or Workers' and Peasants' Red Army [*Raboche-Krest'ianskaia Krasnaia Armia*], a designation not officially dropped until shortly before the recent war. But the term "Red Army" was retained until September, 1946, at which time it was replaced by the designation "The Soviet Army."

The chart on page 418 diagrams the general organization of the present Ministry of War, which differs in some respects from the wartime Commissariat of Defense.* It should be stressed that the Chief Administrations [*Glavnye Upravleniia*; GU] are not command channels to the army field forces, but in most cases concern themselves largely with technical matters, including ordnance development. The exceptions are noteworthy and are discussed below.

* In March, 1953, the Ministries of War and of the Navy were merged again into a new Ministry of Defense.

The wartime Chief Administration of Counterintelligence [*Glavnoe Upravlenie Kontr-Razvedkoi* GUKR, or *Smersh*] was actually not subordinate to the Commissariat at all, but remained under the political police (in the NKVD until April, 1943, when it was removed and placed, in May, 1943, under the new NKGB, which became in March, 1946, the MGB, or Ministry of State Security). Since 1946 counterintelligence has been conducted by the MGB (now MVD), which attaches its own officers, who remain responsible only to it, to the military forces. This should not be confused with Military Intelligence (GRU), not shown on the chart on page 418, which is under the Intelligence Section of the General Staff and is a part of the army.

Similarly, the Chief Political Administration is closely tied to the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

The wartime partisans were organized (with increasing central control) under a special partisan command headed by Marshal Voroshilov.†

† See Chapter 23, pp. 391ff.

Finally, the existence of separate Chief Administrations for Airborne Troops (VDV), the Long-range Air Force (ADD), and Air Defense (PVO) is significant, since it reflects their special character as independent of field Army Group command. These forces are considered as being special resources of the GHQ [*Stavka*]: the first two, for direction or assignment to special missions; the latter, as an independent defense command (embracing warning systems, fighter interception, and antiaircraft artillery).

Air Forces*

* See Chapter 20, pp. 321ff.

The air power of the USSR is divided among seven air forces: the Army Air Force (VVS-SA), the Naval Air Force (VVS-VMF), the Fighter Aviation of the Anti-Air Defense (IA-PVO), the Long-range Air Force (ADD), the Civil Air Fleet (GVF), the Arctic Air Force (under the Chief Administration for the Northern Sea Route), and probably a small MVD Air Force.

This is not so complex or confusing as it may at first appear. The main air force, often called (abroad) the Soviet Air Force, or SAF, is the Army Air Force (literally, the “Military Air Forces of the Soviet Army”) *Voennye Vozdushnye Sily*; VVS-SA]. The VVS is subordinate to the Ministry of War; there is not, and has never been, a Ministry of the Air Force. The chart on page 419 is a diagram of the internal organization of the Army Air Force. As will be seen, the field force consists of Air Armies, which are assigned to Army Groups (“Fronts”) for tactical support by fighter, ground attack, reconnaissance, and bomber aviation.

The Navy[†]

[†] See Chapter 21, pp. 361ff.

The chart on page 420 shows the organization of the Ministry of the Navy. The combat commands are the four fleets: the Northern, Baltic, Black Sea, and Pacific. Coastal ground defenses (which are a concern of the navy’s within 50 kilometers of the coast, except in the front combat zone), naval bases, and the land-based naval air force are all subordinated to the appropriate regional fleet command. Data on the precise organization of the Ministry of the Navy are only approximate. The Navy is believed to continue as an autonomous organization within the new unified Ministry of Defense.

Paramilitary Organizations

The Ministry of Internal Affairs [*Ministerstvo Vnutrennykh Del*; MVD; before March, 1946, the *Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennykh Del*; NKVD] is the successor to the original *Cheka* (ChK) (later the GPU and OGPU),

political police. The MVD was gradually shorn of its paramilitary, intelligence, and counterintelligence functions in the period from 1943 to 1949, as they were vested in the Ministry of State Security [*Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti*; MGB]. Following Stalin's death in March, 1953, the MGB was merged in the MVD, and Marshal Beria again became Minister. The chart on page 421 outlines the present known functions of the MVD.

The prewar *Osoaviakhim*, or Voluntary Society for the Support of Aviation and Chemistry, which had civil-defense and premilitary training duties, was split in May, 1948, into three new societies: DOSARM, the Voluntary Society for Support of the Army; DOSFLOT, the Voluntary Society for Support of the Navy; and DOSAV, the Voluntary Society for Support of the Air Force. In September, 1951, they were again amalgamated into a single central All-Union Society called DOSAAF, under Col. General V. I. Kuznetsov. Membership is estimated at over fifteen million.

Summary

This brief but intensive review and diagraming of the basic organization of the Soviet armed forces is presented here for general orientation and reference. No claim can be made for full accuracy or completeness; various sources of information have been used in an attempt to bring together the facts as of March, 1953.

CHARTS ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE

ARMED FORCES OF THE USSR

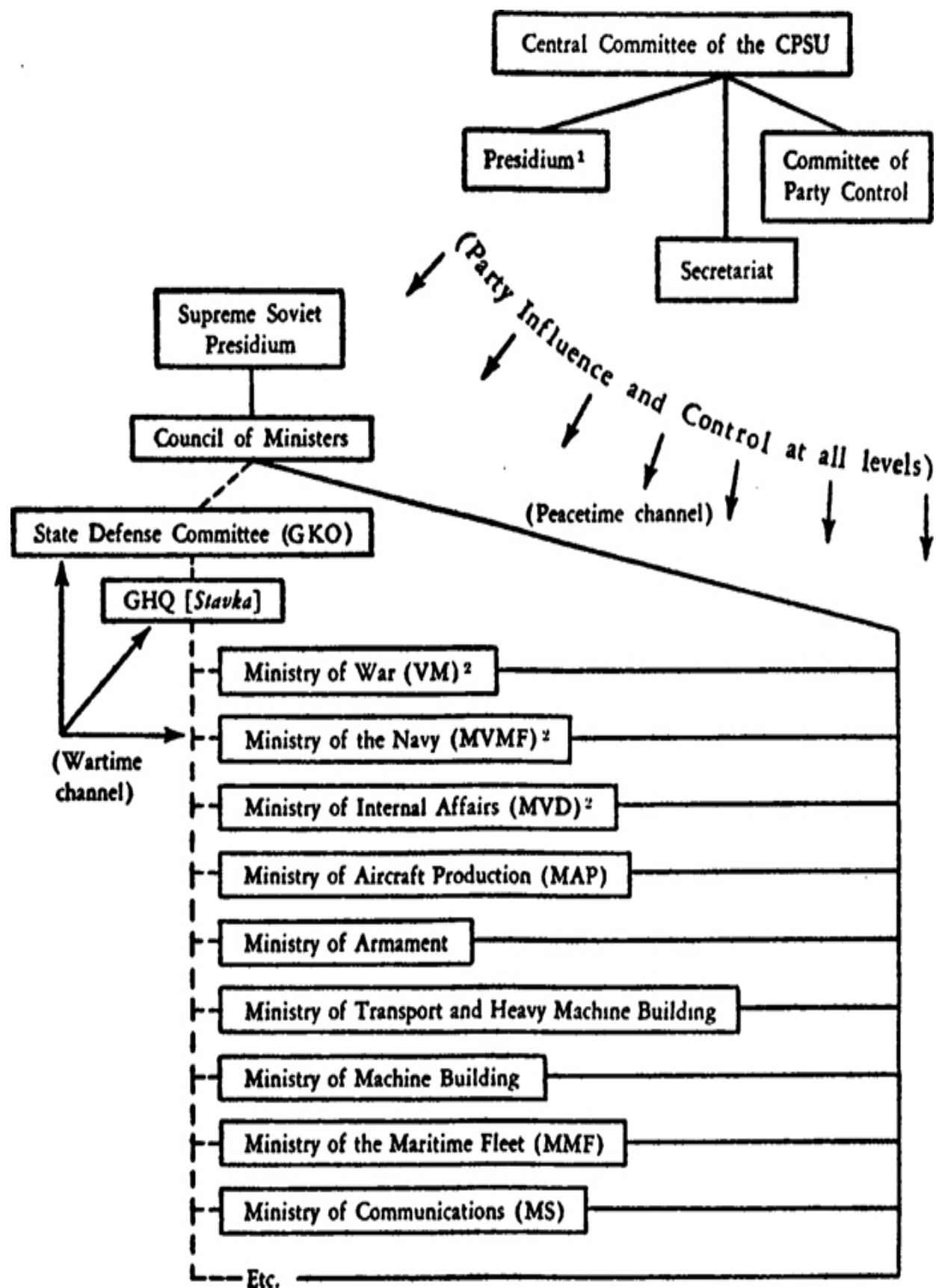
The charts on pages 417 through 421 show the organization of the various branches of the armed forces of the USSR:

The Position of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Government Structure
The Ministry of War (VM)

The Chief Administration of the Army Air Force (VVS-SA)

The Ministry of the Navy (MVMF)

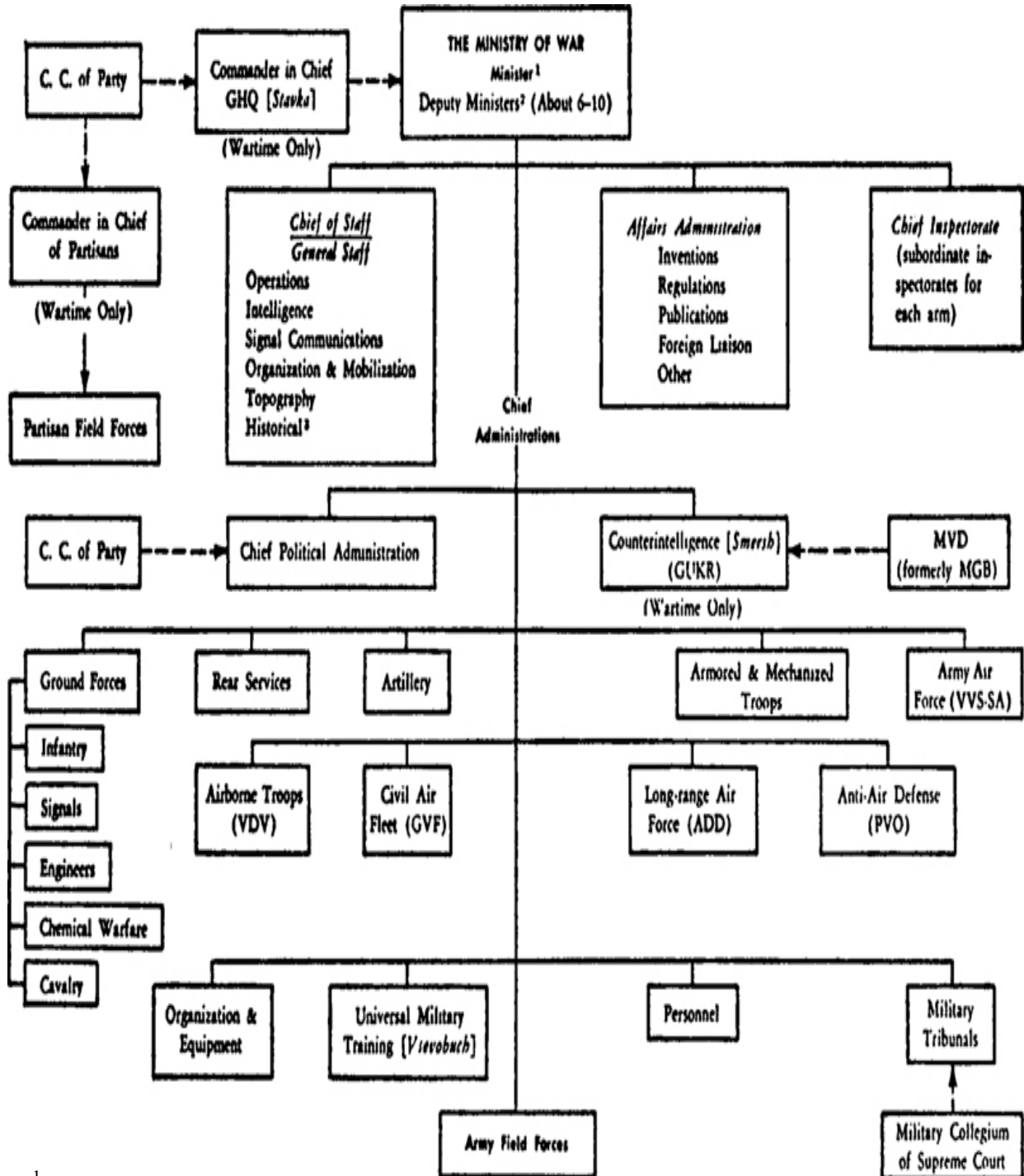
The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD)



The Position of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Government Structure

The Presidium is a new organization replacing and combining the former Politburo and Orgburo. The former Commission of Party Control has been superseded by a Committee of Party Control having expanded functions. These changes have no effect upon the control of the armed forces.

See following diagrams for detailed organization of these ministries.

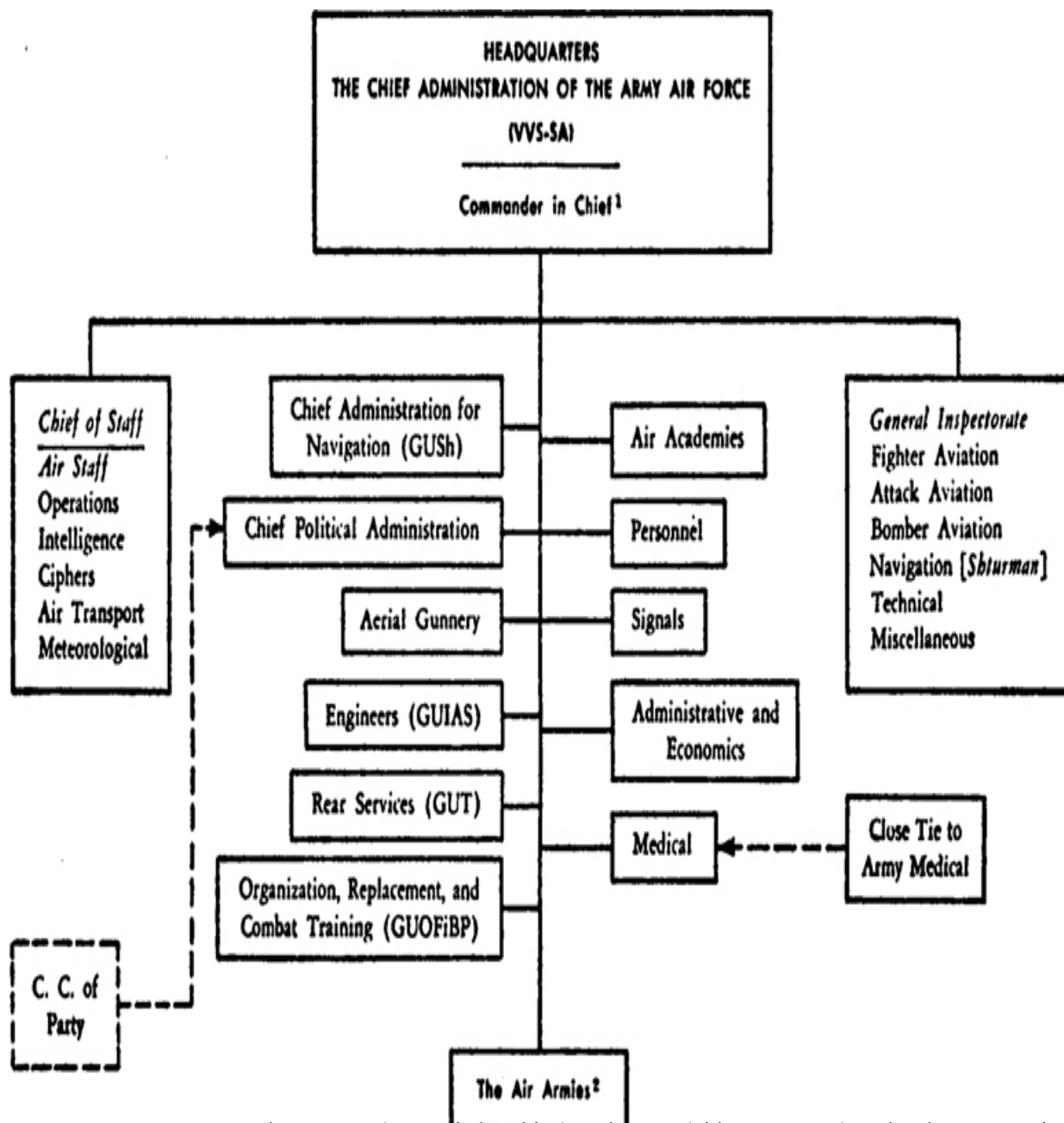


¹ At present, Marshal Nikolai Bulganin.

² Deputy Ministers headed six of the Chief Administrations (Ground Forces, Artillery, Mechanized, Cavalry, Air Force, and Engineers) and the Chief Political Administration in 1946.

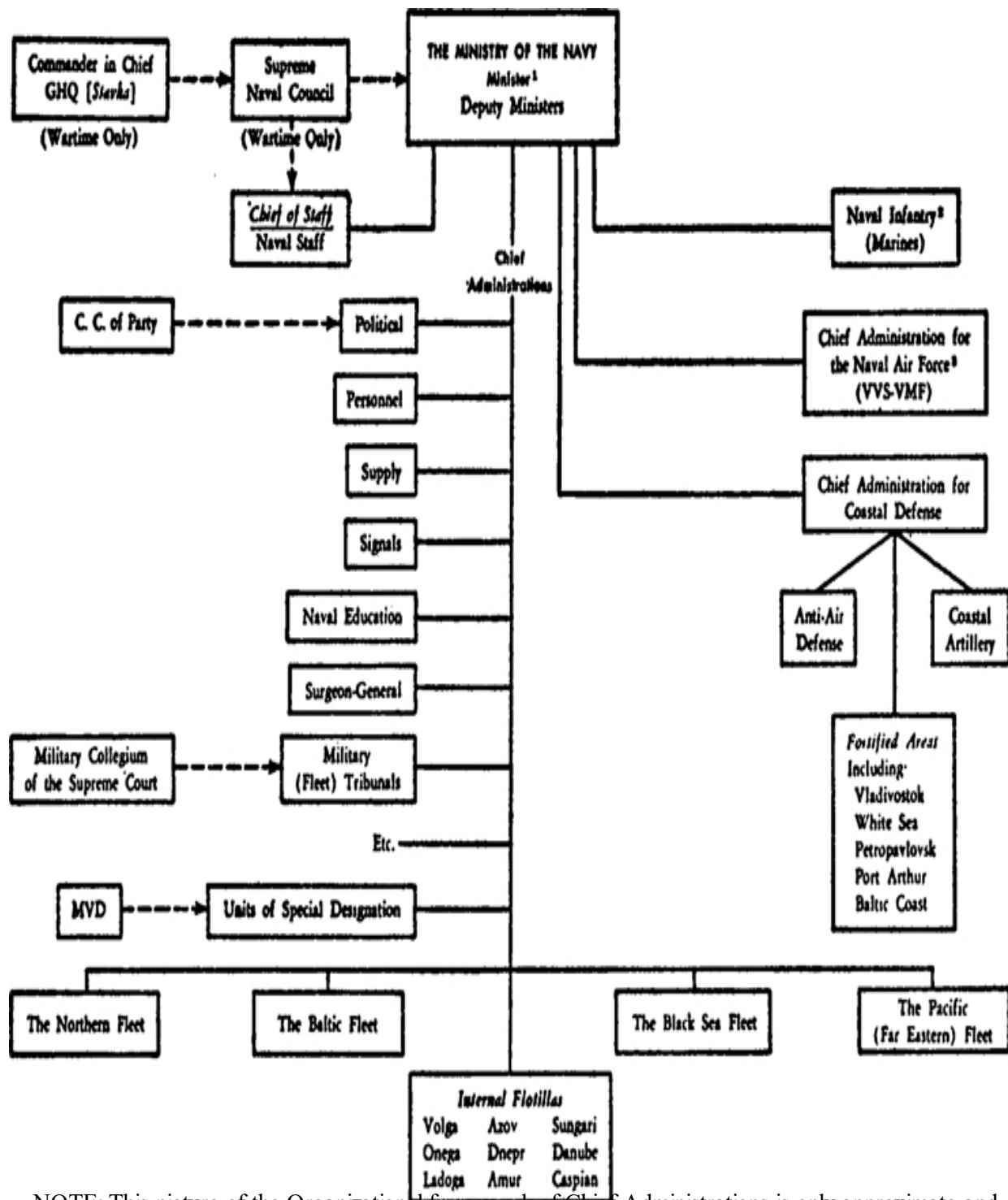
³ Really the basic strategic theory development organization.

⁴ See the following page for a detailed diagram of the Army Air Force (VVS-SA).



NOTE: Some reports place ADD (strategic bombing) and VDV (airborne troops) under the Army Air Force (WS-SA); these are probably incorrect and these bodies remain independent under the Ministry of War.

¹ At present, Col. General of Aviation Pavel Zhigarev.
² Tactical support by bombing, ground attack, reconnaissance, and bomber aviation. During the latter stages of the Soviet-German war there were seventeen Air Armies; at present there are probably fifteen. It should be noted that this chart is concerned with the central administrative organization of the High Command and does not describe the field command structure (discussed in [Chapter 21](#) of this study).

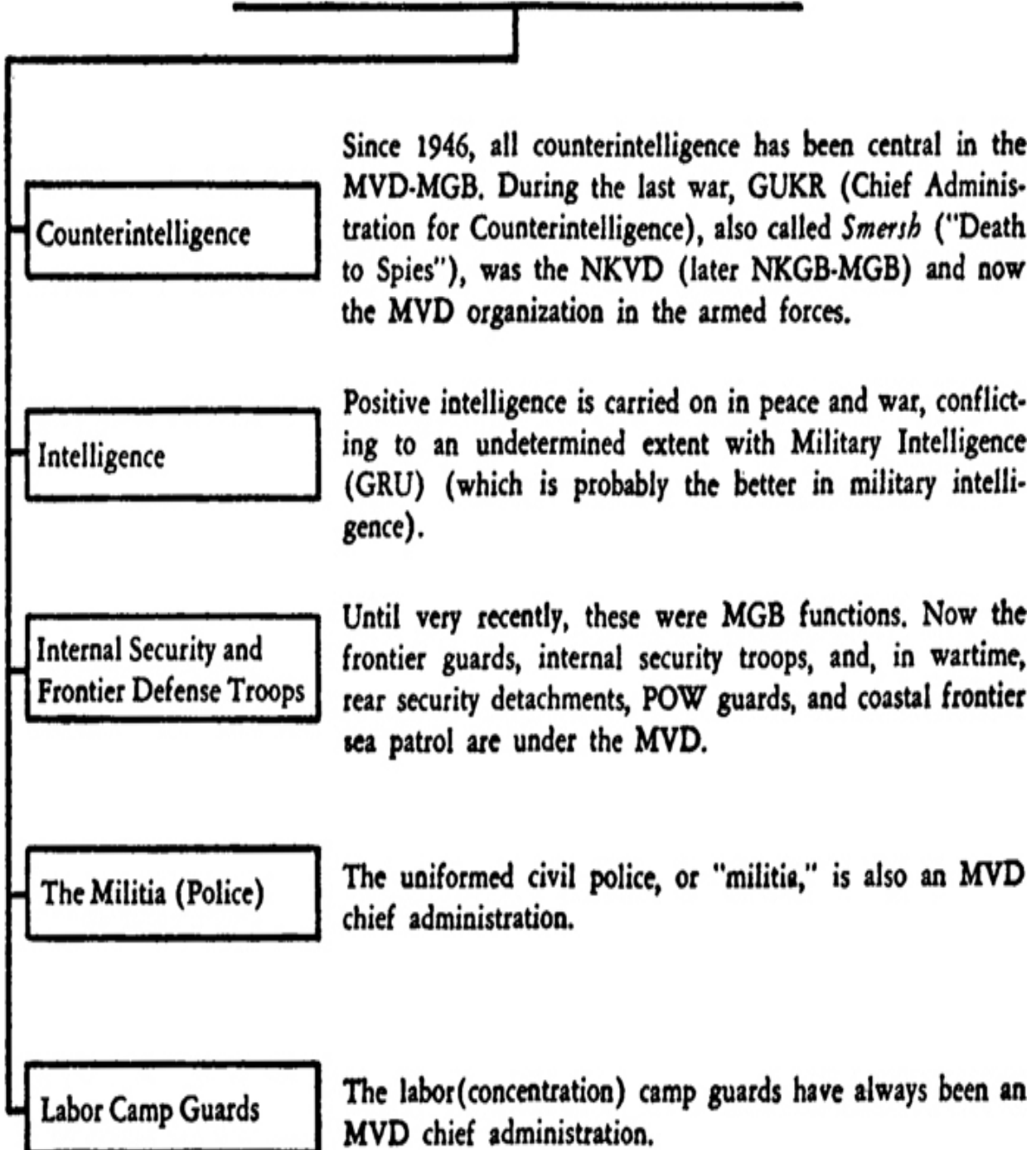


NOTE: This picture of the Organizational framework of Chief Administrations is only approximate and largely extrapolated.

² Presently Vice-Admiral Nikolai G Kuxnetsov.

³ A Chief Administration of Naval Infantry is believed to exist.
Combat organization of the Naval Air Force is four fleet air arms, bad based but subordinate to the corresponding fleet commands.

THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (MVD)¹



¹ From 1943 to 1949, all of these paramilitary and intelligence functions were gradually transferred to the MGB (Ministry of State Security), except for labor camp guards. In March, 1953, the MGB was merged into the MVD and placed again under Marshal Lavrenti Beria.

APPENDIX II

THE TRIAL BY ARMS: JUNE TO DECEMBER, 1941

This study is an analysis of Soviet military doctrine from the point of view of effective principles of war. There has hence been an effort to temper written doctrine with examination of practice. Still, we must remember that even the well-learned lessons of yesterday may be forgotten; and, on the other hand, that new means of warfare hitherto little battle-tried may present a challenge difficult to prejudge. Lenin himself stated several times that “There is no battle in the world where all the probabilities are known beforehand” and “It is *never* possible to ascertain with full precision *before* the battle whether one’s forces ‘have already become stronger than’ those of the enemy.”¹ Or, as Trotsky once put it, “In the bloody equation of war, there are too many unknown quantities.”²

To examine the situation brought about by the German invasion of June 22, 1941, with any thought of prognosticating any hypothetical future outbreak of war would be folly. But from the standpoint of reviewing this trial by arms in terms of Soviet doctrine, especially in terms of both serious departure from doctrine and of misfortune brought about by doctrine, this examination seems a useful task.

The discrepancy between the forces of the invader and those of the defender was impressive, and quantitative consideration surely favored the Red Army; but the German High Command, knowingly attacking a numerically superior foe, discounted weight of numbers just as the Soviet High Command overestimated it.

To understand the story of the first phase of the war, it is necessary to look briefly at the aims and strategy of the German High Command. Although Hitler

announced in a conference on July 31, 1940, his decision to destroy “Russia,” the first and main directive for *Operation Barbarossa* (Directive No. 21, Top Secret) appeared on December 18, 1940. This plan served to implement Hitler’s strategy of infantry frontal breakthrough exploited by blitzkrieg armored enveloping forces, creating inner (infantry) and outer (armored) enveloping pincers, culminating in the annihilation of the Soviet armed forces in being and permitting easy occupation of the European areas of the Soviet Union. The Directive stated:

The German Armed Forces must be prepared to *crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign* (Operation Barbarossa) even before the conclusion of the war against England.... The mass of the Russian Army in Western Russia is to be destroyed in daring operations, by driving forward deep armored wedges, and the retreat of units capable of combat into the vastness of Russian territory is to be prevented.

In quick pursuit a line is then to be reached from which the Russian Air Force will no longer be able to attack German Reich territory. The ultimate objective of the operation is to establish a defense line against Asiatic Russia from a line running approximately from the Volga River to Archangel. Then, in case of necessity, the last industrial area left to Russia in the Urals can be eliminated by the Luftwaffe.

In the course of these operations the Russian Baltic Sea Fleet will quickly lose its bases and thus will no longer be able to fight.

Effective intervention by the Russian Air Force is to be prevented by powerful blows at the very beginning of the operation.³

Hitler’s estimate was that this could be accomplished in 3 months.⁴ And, indeed, 3 months after the invasion, the German press chief, Dietrich, artlessly made public a report from the Fuehrer’s headquarters stating: “The campaign in the East is ended!”⁵ Even earlier, on July 3, Chief of Staff Haider wrote in his diary: “It is probably no exaggeration to say that the campaign against Russia has been won in two weeks!”^{6*} General von Kleist has since admitted that “Everything was based on the idea of decisive result before autumn.”⁷

* General Haider’s diary is used extensively for illustration in this discussion because it was written at the time without external pressures or hindsight. The postwar memoirs of other German generals and the extensive testimony of the Nuremberg trials confirm all the points here demonstrated by Haider’s diary. (Consult the Bibliography, pp. 552–554 for references.)

The German High Command was certainly audacious (if not “adventuristic,” as the Soviets claim) in attacking an enemy of known great numerical superiority in men and materiel. To a certain, perhaps crucial, extent this was due to an underestimation of Soviet forces. Haider wrote on August 10:

The whole situation makes it increasingly clear that we have underestimated the Russian Colossus, which consistently prepared for war with that utterly ruthless determination so characteristic of totalitarian states. ... At the onset of the war we reckoned with about 200 enemy divisions; now we have already counted 360 ... if we smash a dozen of them, the Russians simply put up another dozen. The time factor favors them....⁸

On the same day he added: “Our last reserves have been committed,” and “What we are now doing is the last desperate attempt to prevent our front line from becoming frozen in positional warfare....”

The Germans knew that they would have numerically inferior forces. Even in February, 1941, when planning for *Operation Barbarossa* was begun in operational detail, the German High Command estimated that the opposing forces would be 155 Soviet and 121 German divisions.⁹ By April 4, Haider noted the need to raise estimates of the Russian Army, “as the Finns and Japanese have urged,” to 171 infantry and 36 cavalry divisions and 40 motor-mechanized brigades. On June 21 he recorded the final official German estimate: 141 German divisions, including 19 armored divisions (but not including 5 German divisions in Finland), opposing 213 Soviet divisions, including 37 motor-mechanized brigades.¹⁰

On June 22, 1941, 166 Axis divisions (of which 146, including 19 *Panzer* divisions, were German) attacked from the Barents to the Black Sea.¹¹ The Soviets claim that the German invading force totaled 170 divisions (sometimes raised to 170 German and 61 satellite divisions); Stalin told Hopkins that the total was 175 divisions, a figure not greatly exaggerating the actual strength.¹² The Soviet force countering the invasion numbered between 180 and 188 divisions in the West at the time of the blow, of which about 118, plus 55 to 60 tank brigades, were near the frontier. By August the Soviet force totaled 260 divisions and declined thereafter for a few months because the extremely heavy losses greatly exceeded the Siberian forces rushed to the defense of Moscow.¹³

There is no doubt that tactical and operational surprise was achieved. General Haider’s diary for the early days of the war clearly points this out. On June 22 he wrote the first day’s reports:

Tactical surprise of the enemy has apparently been achieved all along the entire line.... Army Group Center reports Russian command organization in complete confusion.... The enemy was surprised by the German attack. His forces were not in tactical disposition for defense....

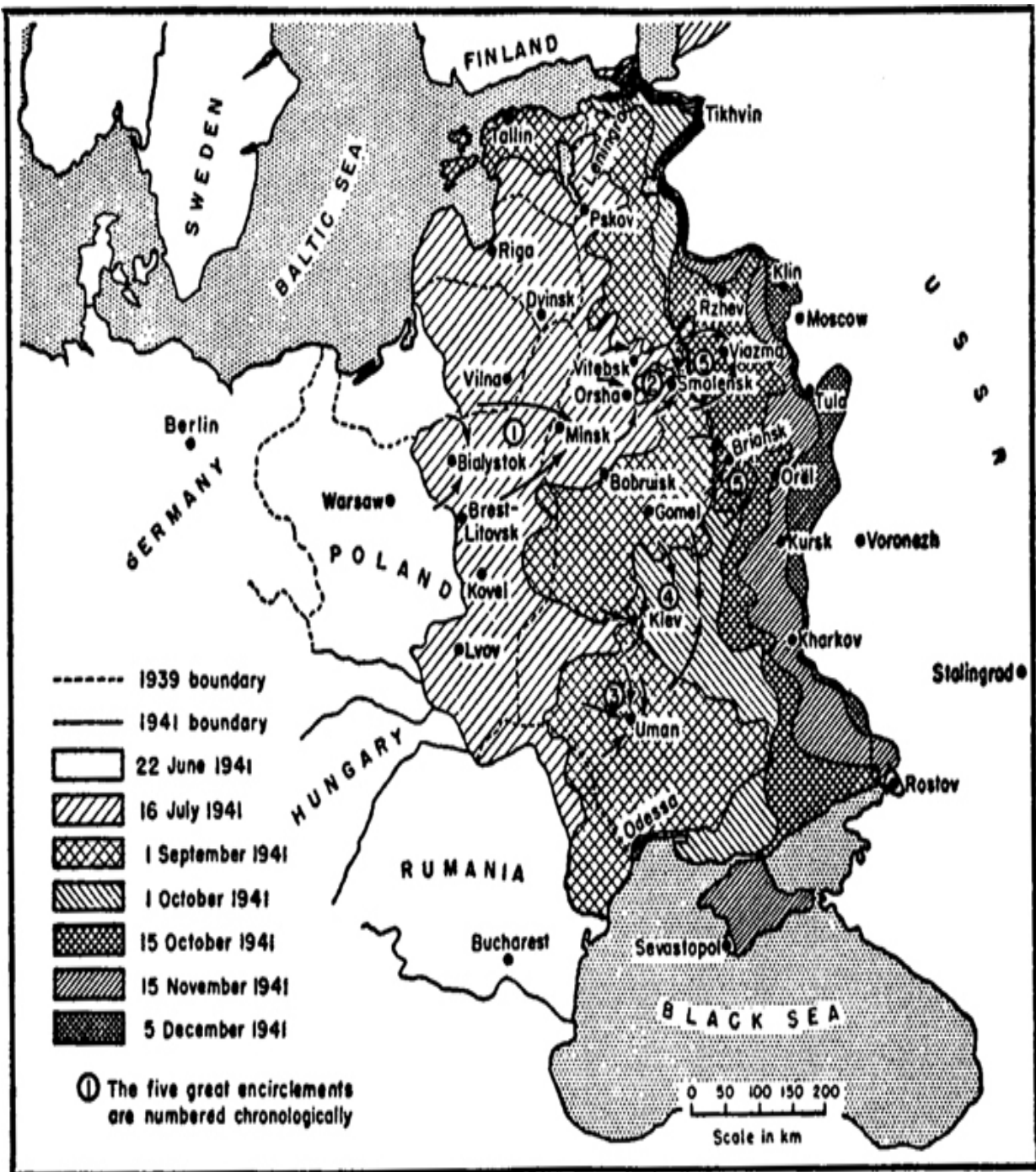
[And on June 23:] I very much doubt that the enemy High Command really has unified and organized control of the situation. It rather looks as if the local withdrawal movements both of the

Ground Forces and the Air Force are being carried out under the pressure of our advances, and that it is impossible at this time to speak of a planned withdrawal.¹⁴

On June 24 he noted that still “there are no signs of an operational withdrawal of the enemy” and that “the Russians had adapted their [prewar] plans to an all-out defensive near the border” (inferred from the unusually large stores of materiel captured). On June 25 he wrote that “The Russians have accepted the great border battle,” and on July 1: “There is no reason to believe the Soviets ever made a long range decision to withdraw. The enemy is just being forced back by us.” On July 8 he added:

The enemy is no longer in a position to organize a continuous front, even behind strong terrain features. At the moment the apparent plan of the Red Army High Command is to check the German advance as far to the West as possible by draining our strength with incessant counter-attacking with all available reserves. In pursuing this policy they evidently have grossly overestimated German losses.¹⁵

But by July 23 Hitler’s insistence on small tactical encirclements caused Haider to declare that “these arguments mark the beginning of the decline of our initial strategy of imaginative operations,” and Hitler’s refusal in the following days to heed the advice of Haider and others that Moscow was the crucial objective troubled the German generals greatly.¹⁶



[The German Invasion and Advance \(June—December, 1941\)](#)

The German armies very nearly succeeded in their objective, cutting off and reducing vast armies in the initial four months of the war. In the Bialystok-Minsk area, 320,000 prisoners, 3332 tanks, and 1809 guns were taken; in the Orsha-Vitebsk-Smolensk pocket, 310,000 prisoners, 3200 tanks, and 3200 guns were taken; in the Uman pocket, 150,000 prisoners were taken; in the

Kiev pocket, 665,000 prisoners, 886 tanks, and 3718 guns were taken; and, finally, in the Briansk-Viazma operations, another 660,000 prisoners and thousands of weapons were taken. In all, the Soviets suffered over 3 million casualties, including the loss of over 2 million prisoners, in the first four months of the war.^{[17](#)}

Yet it is not correct to infer, as many have done, that these vast numbers of prisoners were taken because of widespread voluntary surrender by Red Army men. Indeed, the striking thing is that, under the circumstances, the Red Army fought as stubbornly as it did. Again Haider's diary provides some interesting information. On the first day of the war, June 22, he noted that "After the first shock, the enemy has turned to fight." On June 23 he wrote: "The stubborn resistance of individual Russian units is remarkable. Bunker crews have blown themselves up with their bunkers, rather than surrender." A passage on June 28 indicates that the Russian soldier did not desert at the first opportunity; Haider wrote: "What strikes one in all these battles is the singularly small number of prisoners compared with the large booty ... 35,000 prisoners with 1300 tanks." And on the next day, June 24, he wrote: "Reports from all fronts confirm previous indications that the Soviets are fighting to the last man"; and "Now, for once, our troops are compelled by the stubborn Russian resistance to fight according to their combat manuals." Many such statements could be cited; on July 4 he reported "very tough fighting"; on July 11, "[the enemy] is fighting with fanaticism and dogged determination"; on July 15, "The Russian troops, now as ever, are fighting with savage determination and with enormous human sacrifice"; on July 20, "The enemy pockets in our rear are still a most vexing problem"; on July 23, "Savage counterattacks.... Overall picture: Enemy defense is becoming more aggressive.. and on August 7 he noted that "The enemy elements surrounded at Kiev by our Seventeenth Army are fighting desperately." In fact, according to General Blumentritt, the Russians "repeatedly held on long enough to be encircled," thus being overly tenacious in defense.^{[18](#)}

This strong Soviet resistance was an important factor in the upsetting of the initial German plans. The Germans counted heavily on popular dissatisfaction in the Soviet Union. Von Kleist reported that "Hopes of victory were largely built on the prospect that the invasion would produce a political upheaval in Russia."^{[19](#)} Disaffection existed, but the Germans overestimated its effectiveness in reducing military capability. They further failed utterly to see that the Russian people, while opposed to the Soviet regime, were ready to

die for their *rodina*, Russia, and preferred a native tyrant to a foreign one. German deportment likewise augmented this feeling that the Germans were foreign conquerors rather than liberators. While not meeting the optimum expectation of Soviet doctrine on morale and the support of the rear, in most cases the Soviet citizens did *not* actively cooperate with the Germans against the Soviet regime. Mass surrenders in the early months followed encirclement, isolation, and bewilderment, in which surrenders lack of a positive desire to defend the regime was contributory; but in the later months of 1941 and in 1942, although the Soviets were in retreat, they fought stubbornly and well, not because they had come to love their regime more, but because their command lines were clear, and later because reports of German atrocities, real and fictitious, filtered back through the lines from occupied areas.

Despite Soviet superiority in quantities of materiel and arms, the Red Army's losses were far greater than those of the German army. The Soviet air force numbered over 10,000 combat aircraft at the time of the invasion. In the first two and one-half months of war, over 8000 planes were lost, and by the end of the year the Soviet air force numbered only 2500 operational combat planes.²⁰ During this period German aerial losses were, by comparison, almost negligible. German advance estimates were again very low. In February, 1941, Soviet air strength was officially estimated by the Germans at 1600 to 2000 bombers and 3000 to 4050 fighters.²¹ A few hours after the war commenced, on June 22, General Haider noted: "Air force reports of 800 enemy aircraft destroyed ... our own losses so far 10 aircraft," and later in the same day: "Air force reports 850 enemy aircraft shot down. This includes entire bomber squadrons committed without fighter support, which were taken on and destroyed in the air by our fighters." By June 24 he had written: "The enemy 'air force is completely out of the picture after the very high initial losses (reports speak of 2000).'" On June 26 he reported Russian air strength as estimated at 1900 aircraft. On June 30 he reported 200 enemy aircraft shot down in that one day. Yet on July 1 he wrote:

The Air Force has greatly underestimated the numerical strength of the enemy. It is quite evident that the Russians initially had far more than 8000 planes. Half of this number probably has already been shot down or destroyed on the ground, so that numerically we now are about equal [*sic*] with the Russians. But Russian flying efficiency cannot nearly compare with ours, owing to the poor training of their pilots and crews, and that is why entire enemy squadrons, or large parts of them, get shot down so often in combat, as for instance happened yesterday over Dvinsk and Bobruisk.²²

Former Soviet air force officers now in the West have also described the tremendous losses of the first months. Major General Markoff reported such losses, and told how Lt. General Kopets committed suicide on the second day of the war because of 600 aircraft lost on the front, with only nominal loss to the enemy. He also indicated the lack of preparation for defensive operations, and even for the offensive war plan:

With a wing of long range bombers under my command, I was told to follow the useless “invasion of Germany” plan; opening the sealed orders containing our war tasks, I learned for the first time that these planes were expected to fly 600 miles after dark, and bomb German factories. Yet most of the crews had barely begun to study night flying. I ordered the bomber commander to choose the best eighteen plane crews, and sent them off after dusk, fearing what would happen. The results of this flight were ghastly. Two bombers were wrecked in accidents, five more made forced landings, six returned to our airdrome without finding the target, and only five of the eighteen fulfilled the mission.²³

We have seen Haider’s reports of the destruction of entire bomber squadrons committed without escort. Losses on the ground were also great. Colonel Kotov stated that his airfield, 140 miles from the border, was raided twelve times in the early days of the war, 30 per cent of the aircraft being lost on the ground and another 30 per cent being lost in the air.²⁴ Pirogov also described the heavy losses on the ground. As a result, many trained airmen were assigned to the infantry because of the lack of aircraft. Pirogov said that there were 2000 trained airmen in a grounded reserve at Kazan.²⁵ In a rather unusual statement (for American consumption) the chief Soviet air force correspondent during the war, Lt. Colonel (now Colonel) N. Denisov, admitted that in the early months of the war “Soviet fliers lived through harassing times of initial losses. Many pilots lost their machines during the enemy bombing of aerodromes before they had time to take to the air.”²⁶ Yet the *Luftwaffe* used but 1300 to 3000 aircraft in the Eastern campaign.²⁷

The tale of Soviet tank loss is even more striking. Against 24,000 Soviet tanks (mostly obsolescent), the Germans threw but 2434. For instance, von Kleist had only 600 tanks opposing Budenny’s 2400; and yet 3 months after the invasion, the Soviets are estimated to have lost 17,500 tanks as against German losses of 550.²⁸

It would, however, be incorrect not to note the effect of German losses on the campaign; although very considerably lower, they were relatively significant. General Haider’s diary indicates this very well. The materiel and weapons reserves of the German army were extraordinarily meager. On July 2

Haider noted that German tank replacements totaled 80, 105 additional tanks being expected from current production by July 15 and another 105 by July 30. (Thus, apparently, German tank production was at that time only 210 per month—a fantastically low production for the purpose of all-out war.) On August 19, General Buhle reported to Haider that in Army Group South only 60 per cent of their tanks were operational (and that the artillery could no longer keep up with the advance). On August 24, General Buhle reported: “Decline of combat strength in infantry divisions on an average forty percent, and in armored divisions, fifty percent.” The next day Haider wrote, concerning the escape of considerable enemy forces from the encirclement at Velikie Luki: “The trouble is that our armored divisions now have such a low combat strength that they just do not have the men to seal off any sizable areas.” On September 14, Armored Group Two reported an average of 25 per cent of the tanks as operational. By January 24, 1942, General Buhle was forced to report: “As of May, we shall thus be stripped of *all* tank reserves.” The aircraft situation was little better. As we have noted, the initial ratio was about five to one in favor of the Soviet air force. Despite the enormous Soviet losses, Haider stated on September 12 that the Soviet air strength was 1710 operational aircraft (not including training planes, factory reserves, etc.) as opposed to 995 *Luftwaffe* aircraft.²⁹

Rail transport was seriously weakened by December. On December 4, Haider wrote that there were only ten (instead of the necessary sixteen) maintenance men per kilometer of rail (of whom only one out of ten was German). On December 14, Army Group North reported: “Train arrivals have dropped to an alarming low.” By January 17, 1942, Haider wrote: “The situation on our railroads is well-nigh disastrous.”

The late autumn mud and early severe winter proved valuable Soviet allies. In October, Haider noted that “the entire pursuit operation following the twin battle of Briansk-Viazma has been mired down in bad fall weather,” and that Army Group Center was “stuck in the mud.”³⁰ By December 27, he noted that on this front “the situation [is] aggravated by deep snow.” On January 3, he wrote that “The plain truth is that with the temperature down to 30° below freezing our troops simply cannot hold out any longer”; in the north it was—43°F.

Relative to the high Soviet casualties (mostly prisoners), the German army suffered little; but in terms of its available forces and reserves it was hard hit.³¹ The first month of the war ended with a total of 21,301 casualties. By

December 31, casualties totaled 830,403, or 26 per cent of the Army in the East, including 173,722 dead.³² At the end of one year of war with the USSR, casualties totaled 1,300,000 men, or over 40 per cent of the Army in the East (average strength: 3.2 million), including 271,612 dead.³³ As early as November 21, 1941, Haider wrote: "My old Seventh Infantry Division appears to have suffered heavy losses. Regiments with 400 rifles are commanded by first lieutenants!" This was no isolated case: on November 30, General Buhle reported to Haider that there was a shortage of 340,000 men, i.e., 50 per cent of the infantry combat strength; that company strengths were down to 50 to 60 men; and that there were only 33,000 men in the zone of the interior (Germany). Perhaps most important was the false impression created by the relatively gross Soviet losses. On December 6, 1941, Haider complained that Hitler "cannot be bothered with strength ratios. To him the prisoner of war figures are conclusive proof of our superiority."

These factors, and the tenacious fighting of the Soviets despite vast encirclements and tremendous losses of men and materiel, were not completely lost on the German generals. On August 17, Haider reported von Leeb as presenting "a very gloomy picture ... the troops are exhausted." On December 3, von Bock reported to him that "the moment can not be foreseen when the troops will be at the end of their strength." On December 19, von Kluge reported: "The troops are apathetic; the situation is very unhealthy." And in postwar annotations to his diary, General Haider said of January 15, 1942, that it was "... probably one of the gloomiest days of that winter. The Commanders-in-Chief [of the Army Groups] about that time were almost unanimous in their desire to abandon the Russian front and fall back to the Government-General [of Poland]. Darkest pessimism was intensified by a book on the retreat from Russia in 1812 by General Caulincourt. ... Its circulation was finally prohibited."³⁴

This brief survey of German difficulties explains, at least in part, the German failure to win; and thus, the ultimate Soviet ability to turn the tide. It does not, however, mitigate or explain the causes of the striking Soviet unpreparedness and early great reverses and losses.

In view of the clear Bolshevik insistence on vigilance and preparedness, this complete, and almost disastrous, unexpected blow is especially surprising. It serves to remind us that the Soviet leadership does not always fulfill its own operational requirements or achieve its intended result. It seems

safe to assume that this experience of gross failure to prepare for a possible attack is taken very much to heart, and hence it is quite unlikely that the Soviets will permit such a circumstance to arise a second time. Their aggressive attitude and policy is partly caused by this fear of losing the initiative and being surprised once again, as well as, of course, by their will to advance wherever possible.

The diplomatic scene of June, 1941, was of such a tense character that the Soviets should, on general principles, have been more on their guard than proved to be the case. But the Soviet unpreparedness is even more perplexing when it is realized that there had been at least three specific warnings, including two from separate intelligence espionage rings abroad, 1 month and 2 weeks in advance, respectively, communicating the exact date of attack and the size of the invading force.³⁵ Churchill also sent a specific warning to Stalin on April 19, 1941; but in answer to Churchill's subsequent question as to why this warning was not heeded, Stalin replied: "I thought I might gain another six months or so."³⁶

A ranking former Soviet staff officer told this author that intelligence reports on the German troop movements and border concentration were excellent. Charles W. Thayer has recounted what a Soviet colonel told him in 1945:

For weeks Russian agents had been bringing reports of the build-up on the other side of the frontier. With his own field glasses he could see the German tanks, the motorized artillery, the observation planes, maneuvering a few hundred yards from the Russian positions. Before the Stalin-Ribbentrop Pact, troops on frontier duty always had three weeks' supply of ammunition, gasoline, and food in their dumps and were always on the alert.

But after the Pact, he said, Stalin had apparently been hypnotized by Hitler. First, the border troops were taken off the alert and put on normal status. Then their ammunition supplies were reduced to a week's, then to three days' supply. The orders were received to pull all mechanized units back ten kilometers from the frontier. Along the border itself, only patrols with light arms were allowed to operate. Soviet anti-aircraft guns were forbidden to fire at any strange aircraft lest it cause trouble with Hitler.

And Soviet aircraft had been forbidden to fly within twenty kilometers of the frontier lest they too provoke the Germans. So for weeks they sat there watching the Germans putting more and more units on the front line ready to go.³⁷

The Germans in fact moved over 100 divisions in the 4 months preceding the assault, the only "cover" explanation being the rather incredible idea that this was a feint to deceive the British.

There are signs that this threat was not entirely ignored. Airfield construction in the new Western area was stepped up, and partial mobilization was carried on. According to the German general, von Tippelskirch, the Soviets declared a state of readiness in the West on April 10, 1941.³⁸

In 1940 three Special Military Districts were created in the West (with headquarters in Riga, Minsk, and Kiev) as the basis for Front (Army Group) commands in wartime. However, the transition from the 1940 to the 1941 Mobilization Plan was incomplete when the German attack was launched, and the resultant confusion indicates that the possibility of a German offensive in the spring or summer of 1941 was not recognized. Similarly, the secret Red Army training program for the summer of 1941 contained no provision (even alternatively) for war in that period. Mobilization and training were being effected, but not for war in the spring or summer of 1941. According to former Soviet soldiers and officers, no special preparations for a possible German invasion were made in the political-education classes.³⁹

It is not clear, on the basis of material currently available, whether the Soviets intended to initiate hostilities themselves in the autumn of 1941 or in 1942. Various German sources, notably those concerned in the trials at Nuremberg, have advanced this claim. It is, in part, supported by the statements of several Soviet generals captured by the Germans during the war, including Lt. General Vlasov, but none of these sources claimed to know of any specific war plans or timetable of attack. It is quite likely that the Soviet leadership was prepared to attack Germany under certain conditions; precisely what those circumstances were or would have been is not known.⁴⁰

Soviet military doctrine was not entirely tested in 1941 because of several severe departures from it in practice—especially the failure to be prepared for the (not unlikely) contingency of war with Germany.

Some tenets of Soviet doctrine were so strongly held that the effect was very negative. Foremost among these was the excessive preoccupation with the offensive prior to the outbreak of hostilities, and, corollarily, insufficient planning for defense. We have noted that Soviet training was almost entirely in offensive operations. Another serious error caused by this tenet was the excessive concentration of the Red Army, its air force, and its supply dumps near the frontier areas, thus augmenting the great losses of men and materiel resulting from the successful *Panzer* penetrations. This error was based on a serious miscalculation of the location and of the quantity of reserves needed;

although it was the successful use of reserves, later, that did halt the tide in November and December at Moscow, Tikhvin, and Rostov. Supplementing these errors, the Soviet requirement that withdrawal could only be carried out on receipt of explicit orders from above led many Soviet divisions and even armies to a premature demise. Higher command was frequently “lost”; some commissars were too zealous and others too lax in dealing with the commander’s need for initiative, and the command was in no position to permit withdrawal in a fluid situation. The Soviet command structure was virtually shattered; commanders frequently did not know the location of either their own or the enemy troops.⁴¹ Despite the postwar propaganda claims and the later effective wartime use of defense in depth, the retreat of the early months of the war was not originally planned and executed as “active defense in depth.” According to former Major General Alexei Markoff, a high-ranking Soviet air force commander at the outbreak of the war:

*There were no reserve echelons backing up the front-line troops, because defense in depth was waved aside as sheer nonsense. No defensive war plans were made or even contemplated. Giant supply depots were filled to bursting with arms, ammunition and fuel not in the safe rear, but so close to the frontier as to be within range of Nazi heavy artillery.*⁴²

The one exception to this rule was the deployment in the Baltic States, where there was apparently no intention of defending the lightly guarded forward area west of Riga, Shialulian, Kaunas, and Vilna.⁴³ This buffer was inadequate. In addition to these doctrinal influences, some advantageous and some disadvantageous to the Soviet leadership, certain technical and tactical shortcomings were important. The Red Army in June, 1941, was undergoing four important changes: redeployment, retraining, revision of the divisional formation, and re-equipment with new tanks and aircraft.

Redeployment was basically effected prior to the German assault, but the concentration of most of the Red Army in the newly annexed parts of Poland, Rumania, and the Baltic States was purchased at the cost of stripping the “Stalin Line” of its defense garrisons without the creation of a new permanent defense line farther west. We have noted that the German attack came at a period of transition from one mobilization plan to another.

Training in 1940-1941 strongly stressed small-unit (subdivision) action because of the weakness of this level shown in the Finnish war. However, the increased mobilization of early 1941 introduced many formations not trained in coordinated action, independent command, or large-scale maneuver.

At the time of the German attack, the army division was in the process of reorganization, having a new table of organization of 14,500 men instead of 18,800, as formerly. (Actual strengths were well below the T/O, and, under pressure of war, the T/O was changed to about 10,000 men.)

Finally, most of the basic Soviet aircraft types and standard tanks were obsolescent or obsolete. Although new types were already appearing (the T-34/75 and KV-I medium and heavy tanks; Yak and MiG fighter aircraft, and 11-2, Pe-2, and Tu-2 bombers), they were not available in operational quantities in June, 1941, nor were their operators trained. This was even admitted by the Soviets; Lt. Colonel Denisov wrote:.. [The Germans] chose the moment [for attack] when the Soviet air force was partly in process of re-equipment and had not yet mastered all new types of machines.”⁴⁴ In a number of instances, new Soviet aircraft were even shot down by their own troops because the silhouettes were unknown. The prevalence of obsolescent weapons contributes to an explanation of the almost incredible Soviet losses of tanks and aircraft noted before.

In summary, the main causes of the Soviet reverses of the period from June to December, 1941, were:

- 1) The failure of the Soviet leadership to follow their own doctrine of preparedness for all contingencies and maintenance of a permanent alert for possible war;
- 2) Operational and tactical surprise and the negative momentum of uncoordinated and unplanned retreat;
- 3) The frontier deployment of massed Soviet forces with inadequate mobile operational reserves;
- 4) The failure of doctrine to have provided intelligent withdrawal provisions or a strategic plan for defense in depth;
- 5) The failure of Soviet military authorities to provide adequate tactical defensive training;
- 6) The early breakdown of the communications and command network;
- 7) The qualitative technical inferiority of tanks and aircraft;
- 8) The greater combat experience of the German invasion force.

GLOSSARY OF SPECIAL TERMS

Difference in meaning and nuance between some terms which are superficially the same in American and Soviet military doctrines and other Soviet terms unfamiliar to American conceptions require brief definition. The English equivalent is listed, and the Soviet word is given in transliteration. In addition, it seems advisable to give brief definitions of several Soviet terms which must be listed in transliteration. Finally, some Soviet abbreviations designated by initials are identified.

Active defense [*aktivnaia oborona*]*—*contrasted with stationary positional defense; usually a delaying action with constant counterattacks and harassment of the foe. Not having, as in United States doctrine, so broad a meaning as to include all defense by arms.

Administration [*upravlenie*] and chief administration [*glavnoe upra- vlenie*]*—*the organizational designation of divisions of the Ministries of War and the Navy, as Chief Administration for Artillery; and of the General Staff, as Chief Administration for Operations.

Adventurism [*avantiurizm*]*—*acting politically or militarily more boldly than the objective situation permits, and hence acting irresponsibly. In Soviet terms, acting without adequate calculation of the relation of force [cf. relation of forces].

Air army [*vozdushnaia armiia*]*—*the largest administrative and tactical Soviet army air force unit. Internally balanced (with fighter, attack, bomber, and reconnaissance components), it usually totals roughly from 1000 to 1400 aircraft and represents tactical air support for a Front (Army Group).

Air corps [*vozdushnyi korpus*]*—*a Soviet administrative air force unit composed of 3 or 4 air divisions, or, roughly, 350 to 500 aircraft.

Air division [*vozdushnaia diviziia*]*—*a Soviet air force unit composed of 3 or 4 air regiments, or, roughly, of 100 to 150 aircraft, usually all of one

arm of aviation.

Air offensive [*yozdushnoe nastupleni*]*—*purportedly a Soviet innovation in tactics introduced in 1943, this term designates the continued use of close air support to a land offensive during all phases: preparation, assault, breakthrough, pursuit, and consolidation.

Air regiment [*yozdushnyi polk*]*—*the basic Soviet air force unit, consisting of about 42 fighter or attack-bomber aircraft or 32 bomber or reconnaissance aircraft.

Annihilation [*unichtozhenie*]*—*destruction of all potential opposition. More distinctively an aim of Soviet political doctrine than a military aim.

Army of Special Designation [*Armi/a Osobogo Naznachenii*a] AON*—*this title was given to special Red Army formations, which were basically airborne, prior to the Second World War.

Artillery offensive [*artilleriskoe nastuplenie*]*—*purportedly a Soviet innovation in tactics created in 1943; in reality this term merely indicates continuous artillery support through all phases of an offensive.

Attack aviation [*shturmovaia aviatsiia*]*—*also termed assault aviation; close-support bomber aviation.

Breathing spell [*peredyshka*]*—*a period of recuperative rest in international relations. In Bolshevik thought this situation is only temporary, since the world is viewed as being in a state of constant and permanent struggle between opposed “systems.”

“The Center” [*tsentr*]*—*in the language of Soviet espionage, Moscow headquarters.

Commissar [*komzssar*]*—*(a) originally, the title of government ministers or departmental heads, as Peoples’ Commissar for War; (b) until the recent war, the title of the political officer assigned to each military unit or formation, variously a dual commander or chief deputy [see *zampolit*].

Concentric blow [*konsentricheskn udar*]*—*double envelopment.

Counterblow [*kontrudar*]*—*in recent Soviet terminology, this designates a maneuver between counterattack and counteroffensive; of more than tactical but less than strategic significance, as an action by an army or corps.

Covering group [*prikryvaiushchaia grupp*a]*—*a fighter aviation deployment group to protect a striking force, usually to the upper rear of the latter.

Crushing blow [*sokrushitel’nyi udar*]*—*the usual designation for a frontal offensive aiming at a penetration and overcoming of a hostile defense

line by mass.

Descent [*desant*]*—*a term used to describe not only an airborne attack, but also a coastal amphibious landing or tankborne infantry assault.

Direct fire (artillery) [*priamaia navodka*]*—*artillery pieces firing flat trajectory into hostile positions from the front line.

Direction [*napravlenie*]*—*the usual Soviet designation for an active sector of the front, as “fighting in the Smolensk direction” (meaning, practically: in the event that the Soviets are advancing, fighting toward Smolensk; or if the enemy is advancing, fighting after the fall of Smolensk).

Elements of Special Designation [*Cbasti Osobogo Naznacheniiia*; ChON]*—*secret police military units; a term used in the early 1920’s in the Red Army, and as late as 1947 in the Soviet Navy.

Formation [*soedinenie*]*—*designation for field forces of the size of reinforced brigades, divisions, or corps. (The term “unit,” which see, refers to smaller forces.)

Free hunt [*svobodnaia okhota*]*—*“free-lance” flying by individual or by pairs of fighter or attack aircraft for general reconnaissance and for the attacking of targets of opportunity.

Front [*Front*]*—*the Soviet equivalent of an Army Group; consists of four or five Armies, with additional supporting units and usually one air army.

Frontal blow [*frontal’nyi udar*]*—*a direct offensive strike to penetrate and overcome a hostile defense line by momentum and mass. (In two forms: crushing blow and salient thrust, which see.)

Great Fatherland War [*Velikaia Otechestvennaia Voina*]*—*the Soviet term for the Soviet-German war of 1941–1945. (Often translated Great Patriotic War.)

Hero of the Soviet Union [*geroi Sovetskogo Soiuza*]*—*the highest Soviet award for valor; accompanied by the Gold Star Medal and the Order of Lenin; equivalent to the Congressional Medal of Honor; 10,000 awarded in World War II.

Holding group [*skovyyvaiushchaia grupp*a]*—*until late 1942, the Soviet term for the combat group used for holding the front on secondary sectors in the offense and as the first echelon in defense. (In contrast to the “striking group,” which see.)

Just war [*spravedlivaia voina*]*—*in Communist theory, a war against an imperialist power; in fact, any war involving the Soviet power or its satellites.

Little war [*malaia voina*]*—an early Soviet term for partisan or guerrilla warfare.*

Main blow [*glavnyi udar*]*—the major concentration of forces and effort in an offensive operation; strictly required by Soviet doctrine.*

Main link [*glavnoe zveno*]*—in Soviet political doctrine, the decisive force or position in any situation to be either assaulted or defended.*

Major General [*general-maior*]*—the lowest grade of general officer in the Soviet armed forces. The term has been translated as major general because it overlaps the American ranks of brigadier general and major general (e.g., a general-maior commands a division).*

Mechanized division [*mekhanizirovannaiia diviziia*]*—the weaker of the two types of Soviet armored division, corresponding most nearly to a U.S. infantry division. Strength: 12,800 men and 175–200 tanks.*

Military specialists [*voennye spetsialisty*]*—former Imperial officers in the service of the Red Army during the Civil War.*

Monolithism [*monolitizm*]*—in Soviet terminology, organization with absolute internal homogeneity and external unity of action.*

Naval infantry [*morskaia pekhota*]*—marines and coastal naval defense forces.*

Oblomovism [*oblomovshchina*]*—a word based on the character “Oblomov” in Goncharov’s novel of the same name, and denoting sluggish, apathetic lack of resolve and determination.*

Operating art [*operativnoe iskusstvo*]*—in the Soviet conception, a middle level between strategy (the conduct of war) and tactics (the conduct of battles), representing the conduct of military operations; specifically, military operations by a Front (Army Group) or Army.*

Parallel pursuit [*parallel’noe presledovanie*]*—envelopment of a withdrawing enemy force by flank pursuit, coupled with direct (frontal) pursuit. Favored by Soviet doctrine and approximating U.S. doctrine.*

Partisan warfare [*partizanskaia voina*]*—action behind the enemy lines by sympathetic irregular guerrilla forces.*

Penal battalion (or company) [*shtrajnyi batal’ion or rota*]*—units made up of prisoners (of Soviet nationality); used for especially unpleasant and dangerous tasks and backed up by political police guard units.*

Rear [*fy/’*]*—in general usage, the area behind the front combat zone; but also used to describe the entire zone of the interior and used in relation to material resources.*

Red Army [*Krasnaia Armia*]*—*the title of the Soviet army until September, 1946; since then it has been termed the Soviet Army.

Relation of forces [*sootnoshenie sil*]*—*the fundamental Soviet concept representing the relative strength of Soviet power and hostile strength; the “balance of power.” In political and military strategy its calculation is theoretically the basis for Soviet decision-making.

Salient thrust [*rassekaiushchii udar*]*—*the Soviet equivalent of blitzkrieg, stressing momentum more than mass but combining both.

Special section [*Osobyi Otdel*] OO*—*until 1943, the Soviet term for the counterintelligence secret-police subunit in all military units.

Stalinist [*stal'insk*]*—*literally by or of Stalin, but in fact usually indicating merely a characteristic or accomplishment of the Soviet regime under Stalin's leadership.

Stalinist military science*—*Soviet term used to describe Soviet military science, allegedly a totally new and superior science of war.

Striking group [*udarnaia grupp*a], or shock group*—*(a) until late 1942, the complement of the “holding group” (which see), with the mission of delivering the main blow in the offensive and forming the second echelon of defense or the defensive; (£) small advance groups of six or eight men in combat in heavily populated places.

Tank descent [*tankovyi desanf*]*—*infantry entering combat mounted on the exterior of tanks.

Tank division [*tankovaia diviztia*]*—*the more mobile of the two Soviet armored divisions. Strength: 10,500 men and 250-300 tanks. Equivalent to the much stronger U.S. armored division.

Types of troops [*rody voisk*]*—*arms of service.

Unit [*chast'*]*—*field forces of platoon, company, battalion, and regimental strength.

*Do kontsa**—*“to the very end,” a phrase often used to express Bolshevik determination.

*Dzot**—*an earth and timber bunker or pillbox.

*Eskadril'ia**—*a squadron of nine to twelve aircraft.

*Grupp*a*—*tactical group of six to eight aircraft.

*Kto kogo?**—*a phrase often used in Bolshevik writing, meaning, Who will prevail over (destroy) whom? and indicating belief in constant and inevitable struggle.

Molodaia Gvardiia—(“Young Guard”)—(a) the Komsomol (Communist youth organization) publishing house; (b) a novel by V. Kataev about the Odessa partisan underground.

Para—a pair of fighter or attack aircraft, the basic tactical unit.

Partizanshchina—the pejorative form of the word for partisan warfare.

Politruk—political leader in the armed forces; the former term for a *zampolit* (which term see).

Razvedka—the word signifying both intelligence and reconnaissance.

Razvedupr—See GRU.

Rodina—native land or motherland. Once its use was forbidden by the Bolsheviks, but now it is largely used to mobilize Russian patriotism to Soviet service.

Stnersh—See GUKR.

Stavka—the GHQ; in World War II composed of twelve to fourteen leading Soviet military planners under Stalin and Zhukov.

Voenizdat (Voennoe Izdatel'stvo)—Military Publishing House.

Vsevobuch—The Universal Military Training Administration of the Ministry of Defense.

Zagraditel'nyi otriad—a covering detachment, used to screen the rear from enemy infiltration and to check desertion or unauthorized withdrawal of front-line troops; usually composed of political police troops. *Zampolit (ZamistiteV po Politicheskoi Chast'i)*—the deputy commander for political affairs; formerly termed *komissar* and *politruk*.

Zveno—a flight of four fighter or attack aircraft or of three bomber or reconnaissance aircraft. The basic air administrative unit.

ADD (*Aviatsiia Dalnego Deistviid*), Long-range Aviation (the Soviet strategic bombing force).

DOSA AF (*Dobrovol'noe Obshchestvo Sodeistviia Armii, Aviatsii, i Flotu*), Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and the Fleet. (Formed in September, 1951, by a merger of DOSARM, DOSAV, and DOSFLOT, separate voluntary societies for the army, aviation, and fleet, which in turn, prior to May, 1948, were united in the *Osoaviakhim*, which see.)

DOSARM(see DOSAAF).

DOSAV(see DOSAAF).

DOSFLOT(see DOSAAF).

ChON (*Chast't Osobogo Naznachenii*), Elements of Special Designation (political police units attached to the armed forces).

GKO (*Gosudarstvennyi Komitet Oborony*), State Defense Committee. From July, 1941, to September, 1945, this body was the chief governing body of the Soviet war effort. Composed of five to eight Politburo members under Stalin's chairmanship.

GPU (see MVD).

GRU (*Glavnoe Razvedivatel' noe Upravlenie*), The Chief Administration for Intelligence (division of the General Staff of the Soviet Army); formerly known also as *razvedupr*.

GUKR (*Glavnoe Upravlenie Kontrrazvedkoi*), The Chief Administration for Counterintelligence of the Ministry of War from 1943 to 1946; since merged in the MGB (now MVD). Also known by the portmanteau word *Smersh*, signifying *Smert' Shpionam* ("Death to Spies!").

GVF (*Grazhdanskii Vozdushnyi Flot*), The Civil Air Fleet; presently under the Ministry of War.

MGB (see MVD).

MO (*Ministerstvo Oborony*'), Ministry of Defense; since March, 1953, the unified Soviet military establishment.

MVD (*Ministerstvo Vnutrennykh Del*), Ministry of Internal Affairs; the political police and security organization. Formerly known as the Cheka (1917-1922), GPU (1922-1923), OGPU (1923-1934), and the NKVD (1934-1946). From 1943 to 1946 the counterintelligence function was lodged in a separate organ, the NKGB. In 1946 these became the MVD and MGB, respectively. From 1949-1953 most security functions were transferred from the MVD to the MGB. In March, 1953, following Stalin's death, the MGB was merged into a new MVD.

MVMF (*Ministerstvo Voenno-Morskogo Flota*), the Ministry of the Navy, from February, 1950, to March, 1953; since merged in the MO (which see).

MVS (*Ministerstvo Vooruzhennykh S/7*), Ministry of the Armed Forces. In existence from March, 1946, to February, 1950; superseded by the VM and MVMF (which see).

NKGB (see MVD).

NKO (*Narodnyi Komissariat Oborony*), Peoples' Commissariat of Defense; existed until March, 1946. Now reconstituted in the MO (which see).

NKVD (see MVD).

OO (*Osobyi Otdel*),the counterintelligence surveillance unit in military formation until 1943. See MVD.

PKhO (*Protivo-Khimicheskaiia Oborona*),Antichemical Defense (in field forces).

PTO (*Protivo-Tankovaia Oborona*),Antitank Defense (in field forces).

PVO (*Protivo-Vozdushnaia Oborona*),Antiaircraft Defense: (a) in field forces; (b) Air Defense Command (equivalent); includes warning service, interceptor aviation, and antiaircraft artillery forces of the zone of the interior.

RGK (*Reserv Glavnogo Komandovaniia*),Reserve of the High Command; GHQ reserve.

RKKA (*Raboche-Krest'ianskaia Krasnaia Armia*),Workers' and Peasants' Red Army; since 1946, redesignated Soviet Army.

VDV (*Vozdushno-Desantnye Voiska*),Airborne Troops; an autonomous command.

VM (*Voennoe Ministerstvo*'),The Ministry of War, from February, 1950, to March, 1953; since merged into the MO (which see).

VNOS (*Vozdushnoe Nabliudertie, Opoveshchenie, i Sviaz*'),Air Observation, Warning, and Communication Service; part of the PVO.

VVS (*Voenno-Vozdushnye Sily*),Army Air Forces, part of the MO; there was no independent over-all Soviet air force ministry. This is the largest Soviet air force.

VVS-SA(see WS).

VVS-VMF (*VVS Voenno-Morskogo Flota*),Naval Air Force.

Footnotes

CHAPTER 1 *Soviet Strategy, Military Doctrine, and “Cold War”*

1. J. V. Stalin, “Comrade Stalin’s Answer to a Letter from Comrade Razin,” *Bol’shevik* (“The Bolshevik”), No. 3, February, 1947, p. 6.
2. Boris M. Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii* (“The Brain of the Army”), Vol. 3, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, p. 239.
3. V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia* (“Collected Works”), 2d ed., Vol. 19, Moscow, 1929, p. 50 (all subsequent quotations from the 2d ed.).
4. Quoted in Shaposhnikov, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 13. The second quotation is a marginal comment of Lenin’s to Clausewitz’ *On War*.
5. Col. I. Cherkezov, “Strategy,” *Voennaia Mysl’* (“Military Thought”), No. 9, September, 1940, p. 23.
6. Quoted in F. D. Khrustov, *Frunze O Voiskom Vospitanii* (“Frunze on Military Education”), Moscow, 1946, p. 56.
7. Marshal M. Tukhachevsky, in “Voina” (“War”), *Bol’shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (“The Great Soviet Encyclopedia”), Vol. 12, Moscow, 1928, cols. 577-579.
8. A. Golubev, *M. V. Frunze O Kharaktere Budushchei Voiny* (“M. V. Frunze on the Character of Future War”), Moscow, 1931, p. 9.
9. A. Svechin, *Strategiia* (“Strategy”), Moscow, 1926, 296 pp.
10. Maj. Gen. F. Isayev, “Stalin’s Military Genius,” *New Times*, No. 52, December, 1949, p. 21.
11. Maj. Gen. A. T. Murav’ev, “The Military Legacy of V. I. Lenin,” *Morskoi Sbornik* (“The Naval Journal”), No. 1, January, 1944, p. 17.
12. Cherkezov, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 9, 1940, p. 23.
13. Marshal Nikolai A. Bulganin, *Tridtsat’ Let Sovetskykh Vooruzhennykh Sil* (“Thirty Years of the Soviet Armed Forces”), Speech of February 23, 1948, Moscow, 1948, p. 12; hereinafter cited as *Tridtsat’ Let*. See Chap. 2 for further discussion.
14. Prof. M. Leonov, *Moral’nyi Faktor V Sovremennykh Voinakh* (“The Morale Factor in Contemporary Wars”), Moscow, 1946, p. 21.
15. Stalin’s “On the Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists” first appeared in *Pravda*, No. 56, March 14, 1923, and is found in his collected works, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1947, pp. 160–180. Quotations given were translated from this latter work.
16. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, 1947, pp. 163–164.
17. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, 1947, pp. 166–168. For a very similar “classical” definition, see Stalin, “On the Foundations of Leninism,” in *Sochineniia*, Vol. 6, 1947, pp. 150ff, written in 1924. Tactics are discussed here in terms of the ebb and flow of the revolutionary tide. See also L. F.

Shorichev, *Voprosy Strategii i Taktiki v Trudakh I. V. Stalina Perioda 1921–1925 Godov* (“Questions of Strategy and Tactics in the Works of J. V. Stalin in the Period 1921-1925”), Moscow, 1950, for a recent discussion of these and other relevant writings by Stalin.

18. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
19. Raymond L. Garthoff, “The Concept of the Balance of Power in Soviet Policy-Making,” *World Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 1, October, 1951, pp. 85–111.
20. Maj. Gen. Nikolai Talensky, “The Great Victorious Army of the Soviet Union,” *Bolshevik*, No. 3, February, 1946, pp. 28-29.
21. Maj. Gen. M. Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel’* (“The Strategic Objective”), an excerpt from an unidentified Soviet publication in 1943 or later, p. 129.
22. *Obshchaia Taktika* (“General Tactics”), Vol. 1, Moscow, 1940, p. 16.
23. Garthoff, *World Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1951, *passim*.
24. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
25. Maj. Gen. Nikolai Talensky, “Three Years of the Great Fatherland War of the Soviet People against the German Invader,” *Bol’shevik*, No. 10–11, May–June, 1944, p. 14. This theme is frequently stated.
26. Col. A. Kononenko, in *Stalingrad*, London, 1943, p. 7. (Minor revision of this translation has been made.)
27. Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel’*, p. 129. For a detailed theoretical diatribe against the history of German military doctrine, see I. A. Kryvelev, “On the Characterization of the German Military Ideology,” *Voprosy Filosofii* (“Problems of Philosophy”), No. 2, February, 1947, pp. 109-137.
28. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 6, 1947, pp. 155 and 154.
29. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 22, 1929, p. 265; and *ibid.*, Vol. 10, 1928, pp. 80-81.
30. Cf. *The Strategy and Tactics of World Communism*, House (of Representatives) Document 619, Washington, 1948; *The Communist Party of the United States as an Agent of a Foreign Power*, House Report 209, Washington, 1947; *Communism in Action*, House Document 754, Washington, 1946; *Report of the Royal Commission*, Ottawa, 1946; and Lt. Col. Wm. R. Kintner, *The Front Is Everywhere: Militant Communism in Action*, Oklahoma, 1950, 253 pp.
31. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 4, 1947, pp. 171-172 (November 24, 1918).
32. In K. Voroshilov, *et al.*, *The Red Army Today*, Moscow, 1939, p. 54.

CHAPTER 2 *The Soviet Concept of Military Doctrine*

1. Lt. Gen. V. F. Vorob'ev, *Tovarishch Stalin—Organizator Pobed Na Frontakh Grazhdanskoi Voiny* ("Comrade Stalin—Organizer of the Victories on the Fronts of the Civil War"), public lecture, Moscow, 1949, p. 5; hereinafter cited as *Tovarishch Stalin*.
2. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 8, p. 460, quoted in Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
3. For other commentaries on these discussions, see especially D. D. Fedotoff White, *The Growth of the Red Army*, Princeton, 1944, especially pp. 158-276; D. D. F. White, "Soviet Philosophy of War," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 51, 1936, pp. 340-349; Theodor Adamheit, *Sowjetarmee und Weltrevolution* ("The Soviet Army and World Revolution"), Berlin-Leipzig, 1942, *passim*; and Ryzard Wraga, "Soviet Militarism—II," *The Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 2, September, 1949, pp. 50-61.
4. Stalin's role at the time was negligible. In his *Short Course* Party history, written in 1938, Stalin chastizes both but is more favorable to the Military Opposition. Frunze, who is praised highly in Soviet military literature, is not identified as having been the leader of the Military Opposition. See J. V. Stalin, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course*, New York, 1939, p. 235; hereinafter cited as *History of the CPSU(B)*.
5. Mikhail Frunze, "A Unified Military Doctrine and the Red Army," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia* ("Military Science and Revolution"), Vol. 1, 1921, p. 39.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
8. Quoted in Khrustov, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.
9. L. Trotsky, "Military Doctrine or Sham-Military Doctrinairism," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 214.
10. See discussion in White, *Growth of the Red Army*, pp. 160-162; and D. Petrovsky, "The Dispute on Military Doctrine," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1922, pp. 3-4.
11. Col. P. Chuvikov, *Marksistkoe-Leninskoe Uchenie O Voine i Armii* ("Marxist-Leninist Teaching on War and the Army"), Moscow, 1946, p. 94. It should be noted that Chuvikov has been criticized for this work, although not for this point. See N. Vladimirov, "An Unsuccessful Book," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1946, pp. 80-90, and Col. M. Zhuravkov, "A Book Containing Serious Shortcomings," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 17, September, 1950, pp. 58-63, commenting on the revised 1949 edition.
12. Cf. V. Egorev, "Military Science among the Other Sciences," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia* ("Military Thought and Revolution"), Vol. 3, 1922, pp. 3-10; and E. Smylovsky, "Military Science and Military Art," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1922, pp. 11-20.
13. J. V. Stalin, "Comrade Stalin's Answer to a Letter from Comrade Razin," *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, February, 1947, p. 6. Engels' military judgment is criticized and overridden on one point in this same article.

14. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 20; see also Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, p. 5.
15. Vorob'ev, *Tovarishch Stalin*, p. 17. The author has interviewed at some length the co-leader of this anti-Bolshevik mutiny, former Imperial Guards Capt. Alexander Vasiliev, and there seems to be no basis for considering the Bolshevik action either daring in terms of conventional military science or particularly brilliant in execution. Captain Vasiliev declares that aircraft were *not* used in this operation.
16. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 4, 1947, p. 261.
17. Marshal N. A. Bulganin, "Stalin and the Soviet Armed Forces," *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, December, 1949, p. 69.
18. Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, p. 12.
19. Bulganin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 69.
20. Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, p. 12.
21. Marshal K. E. Voroshilov, "The Gifted Commander of the Great Fatherland War," *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, December, 1949, p. 39.
22. Marshal A. Vasilevsky, "Comrade Stalin—Builder of the Armed Forces of the Soviet State," *Krasnaia Zvezda* ("Red Star"), December 21, 1949, PP. 2–3; and Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, pp. 20–21.
23. Svechin, *op. cit.*, *passim*, Cherkezov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1940, p. 23; and Maj. Gen. P. D. Korkodinov, "The Operating Art of the Red Army," *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 8. The conception of an "operating art" between strategy and tactics apparently originated immediately prior to the First World War with two Imperial Russian General Staff officers, Gen. A. Gerua and Col. E. Messner, who coined the term *operatika* to represent this conception. Svechin (and his German contemporaries) apparently adopted the idea from this source. Cf. A. A. Kersnovsky, *Filosofiia Voiny* ("The Philosophy of War"), Belgrade, 1939, pp. 31//.
24. "The Operating Art," *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, Vol. 43, 1939, cols. 179 and 182.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 8.
27. "Strategy," *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, Vol. 52, 1947, col. 942.
28. Stalin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1947, p. 7. This theme is often stated; see Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, p. 9; Vorob'ev, *Tovarishch Stalin*, p. 4; Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 38.
29. Lecture by Col. Kashirin, Moscow Home Radio, February 21, 1950; also cf. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 7.
30. Cf. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, FM 100-5, U.S. War Department, June 15, 1944, pars. 112–120, inclusive.
31. Cf. Maj. Gen. Sir F. Maurice, *Principles of Strategy*, New York, 1930, 243 pp.; Lt. Col. A. H. Burne, *The Art of War on Land*, Harrisburg, 1947, pp. 4 and 13, especially; and Rear Adm. C. R. Brown, "The Principles of War," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 57, No. 6, June, 1949, pp. 621–633, for interesting discussions.
32. Egorev, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1922, p. 9.

33. Trotsky, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 209.
34. Because of the consequences of error in the Soviet Union, military theorists hesitate to compile lists of war principles. To the author's knowledge, only two such compilations have been made recently, both by members of the Historical Division of the General Staff. See Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 19–34; and Lt. Gen. E. A. Shilovsky, *L' Art Militaire de L'Armee Rouge*, Moscow, 1944, pp 3-4; hereinafter cited as *L' Art Militaire*. (The Russian edition was, unfortunately, not available to the author.)
35. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 4, 1947, pp. 148-151, October 30, 1918; and J. V. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 45; hereinafter cited as *On the Great Patriotic War*.
36. For examples see Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 39; Prof. Maj. Gen. N. V. Pukhovsky, *O Prevoskhodstvo Sovetskoi Voennoi Nauki nad Burzhuaznoi Voennoi Nauki* ("On the Superiority of Soviet Military Science over Bourgeois Military Science"), Moscow, 1949, p. 28; Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 22; Lt. Gen. V. Zlobin, "Contemporary Front Operations," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1945; Marshal K. Vershinin, "The Soviet Air Force," *Pravda*, July 17, 1949; Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-88; A. Samsonov, "The Great Stalingrad Engagement," *Voprosy Istorii* ("Problems of History"), No. 5, May, 1950, p. 17; and Maj. Gen. Nikolai Talensky, "The Strategic Counteroffensive," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 7.
37. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 22. See also Pukhovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
38. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 41.

CHAPTER 3 *Fundamental Influences on Soviet Military Doctrine*

1. V. I. Lenin, *Sotsializm i Voina* ("Socialism and War"), Moscow, 1933, p. 5. First written, with Zinoviev, in August, 1915.
2. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 30, 1929, p. 149.
3. Stalin, *History of the CPSU(B)* (written in 1938), pp. 167–168. See also Stalin's letter to Gorky, January 17, 1930, in *Sochineniia*, Vol. 12, 1949, p. 176, for an interesting statement of how "just" wars are desirable, despite bloodshed equal to that in an "unjust" war.
4. The Marxist theory of war and its manifestations in Lenin's writings and early official documents is presented in T. A. Taracouzio, *War and Peace in Soviet Diplomacy*, New York, 1940, pp. 32 *et passim*. Numerous other works could be cited for the relevant writings of the Bolsheviks; suffice it here to mention *Voina i Voennoe Iskustvo v Svete Istoricheskogo Materializma* ("War and the Military Art in the Light of Historical Materialism"), a symposium by Riazanov, Tukhachevsky, *et al.* (B. Gorev, ed.), Moscow, 1927, *passim*; G. Zinoviev, "Bolshevism and War," *Bol'shevik*, No. 13–14, July, 1934, pp. 32–56; A. Geronimus (ed.), *Marksizm-Leninizm o Voine i Armii* ("Marxism-Leninism on War and The Army"), Moscow, 1932; Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, *passim*-, and of the commentary works, B. C. Friedl, *Les Fondements Theoretiques de la Guerre et de la Paix en URSS*, Paris, 1945, *passim*, hereinafter cited as *Les Fondements Theoretiques*-, Adamheit, *Sowjetarmee und Weltrevolution*, *passim*-, and White, *The Growth of the Red Army*, *passim*. Consult the Bibliography, pp. 'iOlf, for additional sources.
5. S. Neumann, "Engels and Marx: Military Concepts of the Social Revolutionaries," in *Makers of Modern Strategy* (E. M. Earle, ed.), pp. 157–158.
6. F. Engels, *Anti-Dihring* (p. 110 of 1932 Russian ed.), quoted in Geronimus, *Marksizm-Leninizm o Voine i Armii*, p. 9–10.
7. Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii*, Vol. 2, p. 13; and *ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 230.
8. Trotsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 206.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Cf. D. Petrovsky, "On the Question of Single Command," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1922, pp. 3–9; V. Antonov-Ovseenko, "The Results of the Third All-Union Conference of Military Political Warfare," *ibid.*, Vol. 6, 1923, pp. 1–12; V. Levichev, "Political Preparation of Fighters," *ibid.*, Vol. 3, 1923, pp. 14–25.
11. St. Ivanovich (pseud.), *Krasnaia Armia* ("The Red Army"), Paris, 1931, p. 32.
12. Erich Wollenberg, *The Red Army*, London, 1940, p. 41.
13. D. Petrovsky, "The Russian Revolution and Construction in the Red Army," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 26.

14. Cf. Lenin, "Partisan War" (1906), *Sochineniia*, Vol. 10, 1928, pp. 80–88; Lenin, "Ten Theses of Soviet Power" (March, 1918), *Sochineniia*, Vol. 22, 1929, *passim*; and Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 3, 1946, pp. 71 and 154, for the phrases cited and for general Bolshevik discussion of this matter.
15. For example, see Stalin, *History of the CPSU(B)*, p. 235, and also Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, p. 4.
16. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 4, 1947, p. 249.
17. Tukhachevsky, "The Red Army and the Militia" (January, 1921), as quoted in Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 171–173.
18. Mikhail Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov* ("The War of Classes"), Moscow, 1921, p. 27.
19. Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 173–176.
20. Pukhovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
21. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 38.
22. Trotsky, speech of April 21, 1918, in *Sochineniia*, Vol. 17, Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, p. 236.
23. *Ibid.*, speech of April 23, 1918, p. 316.
24. *Ibid.*, speech of April 22, 1918, p. 238.
25. Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
26. Lt. Col. J. D. Hittle (USMC), *The Military Staff*, rev. ed., Harrisburg, 1949, p. 239, p. 94.
27. A. S. Bubnov, S. S. Kamenev, and R. P. Eideman, *Grazhdanskaia Voina, 1918-1921* ("The Civil War, 1918-1921"), Vol. 2, Moscow, 1928, p. 94.
28. Hittle, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
29. Geronimus, *Marksizm-Leninism o Voine i Armii*, pp. 245–248.
30. An article in *Voina i Revoliutsiia*, No. 9, 1929, quoted by Ivanovich, *op. cit.*, p. 33; White, in *The Growth of the Red Army*, p. 299, and R. Goudima, in *L'Armee Rouge dans la Paix et la Guerre*, Paris, 1947, p. 132, repeat these data.
31. White, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1949, p. 346.
32. Alexander Barmine in an interview with this author.
33. For other discussions of these former Tsarist officers, see Ivanovich, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–33; Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 and 60–64; Hittle, *op. cit.*, pp. 238–239; Goudima, *op. cit.*, pp. 132 and 137; White, *The Growth of the Red Army*, *passim*; White, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1949; and M. Berchin and E. Ben-Horin, *The Red Army*, New York, 1942, *passim*.
34. This and subsequent statements by Barmine are all taken from an interview with him.
35. For a brief biographical resumé, see Berchin and Ben-Horin, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–109.
36. Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii*, Moscow, 1927–1929, Vols. 1, 2, and 3. This work is discussed in Chap. 13.
37. Hittle, *op. cit.*, p. 242; Hittle does not indicate his source. Both Hittle and White stress the strong influence exerted by Tsarist doctrine.

38. Maj. K. Ivanov, "Russian Military Thought at the Juncture of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1946, pp. 49-65, especially p. 64; see also Hittle, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-237.
39. Cf. S. Gliazer, *Bitva Na Chudskom Ozere* ("The Battle on Lake Peipus"), Moscow, 1938, 36 pp.
40. For recent Soviet accounts praising Brusilov, see Col. A. Redkin, "Brusilov's Breakthrough," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, pp. 53-66; and Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, June, 1946, pp. 26-27.
41. The best general treatment is by Prof. K. V. Bazilevich, *Russkoe Voennoe Iskustvo* ("The Russian Art of War"), Moscow, 1944, 23 pp. (translated into English by *Soviet War News*, London, 1945, 47 pp.); cf. also *O Nachal'nykh Etapakh Rasvitiia Russkogo Voennogo Iskustva* ("On the Early Stages of Development of Russian Military Art"), a collection of articles, Moscow, 1951, 123 pp.; and V. I. Lebedev *et al.*, *Nashi Veliki Predki* ("Our Great Forefathers") (in Ukrainian), Kiev, 1949, 110 pp. (discussion of Nevsky, Donskoi, Pozharsky, Suvorov, and Kutuzov).
42. See Ivanov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, pp. 50#.
43. Col. G. P. Meshcheriakov, "On the Military Reforms of Peter I," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, pp. 48-62; and Bazilevich, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-14.
44. Col. V. V. Pruntsov, *Polkovodets P. A. Rumiantsev* ("The Strategist P. A. Rumiantsev"), Moscow, 1946, *passim*, and Lt. Col. N. Vasil'ev, "The Strategist P. A. Rumiantsev," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, pp. 85-92.
45. G. N. Karaev, *Suvorovskaia "Nauka Pobezhdat'" V Svete Peredovoi Sovetskoi Voennoi Nauki* ("The Suvorov 'Science of Victory' in the Light of the Advanced Soviet Military Science"), Leningrad, 1950, p. 3.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
47. For recent works by and on Suvorov, see: A. V. Suvorov, *Polkovoe Uchrezhdenie* ("The Regimental Institution"), Voenizdat, 1949; Suvorov, *Nauka Po bezbdat'* ("The Science of Victory"), Gospolitizdat, 1943, and Voenizdat 1950; *Aleksander Vasil'evich Suvorov: Kratkii Biograficheskoi Ocherk* ("Alexander V. Suvorov: A Short Biographical Account"), Voenizdat, 1950; K. Osipov, *A. V. Suvorov: 1730-1800*, Molodaia Gvardiia, 1949; Col. G. P. Meshcheriakov and L. G. Beskrovnyi, *A. V. Suvorov*, Voenizdat, 1946; L. O. Rakovsky, *Generalissimus Suvorov*, Moscow, 1950; K. Pigarev, *Soldat-Polkovodets* ("The Soldier Strategist"), OGIZ, 1943; S. Kalinin, *Suvorov*, Voenizdat, 1938; A. Bogoliubov, *Polkovodcheskoe Iskustvo Suvorova* ("The Art of Suvorov's Commanding"), Voenizdat, 1939; G. Nikolsky, *Suvorovskaia "Nauka Pobezhdat'"* ("Suvorov's 'Science of Victory'"), Voenizdat, 1949; and N. Naumov and V. Iur'ev, *Suvorov-Iskustvo Voevat'* ("Suvorov—The Art of Fighting"), Molodaia Gvardiia, 1943.
48. Cited by White, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1949, p. 341.
49. Stalin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1947, pp. 7-8.
50. See N. Korobkov, "Kutuzov—Strategist," *Istoricheskii Zhurnal* ("Historical Journal"), No. 5, 1942, pp. 33-52; N. Korobkov, "Kutuzov," *Zburnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk* ("Journal of the Tank and Mechanized Troops"), No. 9, September, 1945, pp. 4-10; Maj. Gen. N. F. Garnich, *Borodinskoe Srazhenie* ("The Battle of Borodino"), Moscow, 1949, 31 pp.; Garnich, *Otechestvennaia Voina 1812 goda* ("The

Fatherland War of 1812”), Moscow, 1949, 39 pp.; and Maj. P. Rozhkov, “Parallel Pursuit of the Napoleonic Army by Kutuzov,” *Voennaia Mysl*, No. 8, August, 1946, pp. 55-73.

51. *Krasnyi Flot* (“Red Fleet”), editorial, July 4, 1950.
52. Maj. Gen. S. F. Naida, *Sinopskaia Pobeda Russkogo Flota* (“The Victory of the Russian Fleet at Sinope”), Moscow, 1949, 32 pp.; and E. Tarle, *Nakhimov*, Moscow, 1943, 215 pp.
53. Vice-Admiral S. O. Makarov’s basic work, *Voprosy Morskoi Taktikii Podgotovki Ofitserov* (“Questions of Naval Tactics and the Preparation of Officers”), was republished in 1943 without censorship for the guidance of naval officers. The military academies for young future naval officers, the counterpart of the Suvorov schools of the army, are termed Nakhimov schools. Compare also *Russkoe Voenno-Morskoe Iskusstvo* (“Russian Naval Art”) (Capt. of the 1st Rank R. N. Mordvinov, ed.), Moscow, 1951, 455 pp.
54. Col. Derman, *Dragomirov’s Views on the Teaching and Training of Soldiers*, a pamphlet issued in 1946.
55. Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel*, p. 122.
56. N. Levitsky, “The Creative Genius of the Army of the Socialist Revolution,” *Bol’shevik*, No. 4, February, 1938, p. 59.
57. Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii*, Vol. 3, p. 227.
58. Byron Dexter, “Clausewitz and Soviet Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 1, October, 1950, pp. 41–55, discusses Clausewitz’ influence on current Soviet strategy.
59. *Leninskii Sbornik* (“Works of Lenin”), Vol. 12, 2d ed., Moscow-Leningrad, 1931, pp. 389–452. It is also located in the archives of the Lenin Institute in Moscow (Document No. 18674). It has been translated into French in Friedl, *Les Fondements Theoretiques, passim*. The *Leninskii Sbornik*, which has the original German and Russian translation on facing pages, was used in this study. Quotations used are taken from the Modern Library edition of Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, translation by O. J. M. Jolles, New York, 1943.
60. Lenin, *Sotsializm i Voina*, p. 9; see also Lenin, *The Fall of the Second International* (1915), for a similar statement.
61. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 30, 1932, p. 333 (May 14, 1917).
62. Cited in Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii*, Vol. 3, p. 228.
63. Stalin, “Comrade Stalin’s Answer to a Letter from Comrade Razin,” *Bol’shevik*, No. 3, February, 1947, pp. 4–8. Razin was a colonel engaged in writing an eight-volume military history, five of which were completed after 15 years of study, two of them revised along suggestions by Shaposhnikov (who died in 1945). (Stalin gratuitously refers to them as “your brief theses on war.”) The problem arose when Razin questioned a sharp criticism of Clausewitz, made by Lt. Col. G. Meshcheriakov (in *Voennaia My sl*, Nos. 6–7, 1945). Razin referred to passages from Lenin, including those which this author has cited above, in defense of his position. (These letters have been translated in *Military Affairs*, Vol. 13, No. 2, Summer, 1949, pp. 75–78, and discussed in an article by Lt. Col. Wm. R. Kintner (LISA), “Stalin on War,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, August, 1948, pp. 55-59.)
64. Stalin, *Bol shevik*, No. 3, 1947, p. 6.
65. *Pravda*, editorial, February 23, 1937.

66. Marshal K. E. Voroshilov *et al.*, *The Red Army Today* (speeches at the 18th Party Congress), Moscow, 1939, p. 35.
67. The Soviet military press now attacks Clausewitz frequently. For a detailed criticism, see Lt. Col. G. Meshcheriakov, in *Voennaia Mysl*, Nos. 6 and 7, 1945; Kryvelev, *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 2, 1947, pp. 109-137; and "The Reactionary Character of the Military-Ideological Views of Clausewitz," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, December 2, 1947.
68. For evidence and discussion of the military and war supply production arrangements, see Gustav Hilger and Alfred Meyer, *The Incompatible Allies-. German-Soviet Relations, 1918-1941*, Harvard, 1953, Chap. 7, *passim*; F. R. Rabenau, *Seeckt, Aus seinem Leben 1918-1936*, Leipzig, 1940, pp. 505ff; Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-300; the unpublished *Seeckt Papers*, in the National Archives, Washington, Lager 1864; Ypsilon (pseud.), *The Pattern for World Revolution*, Chicago, 1947, pp. 76-77; Max Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1929-1936*, Vol. 1, London, 1947, pp. 59ff', Cecil F. Melville, *The Russian Face of Germany*, London, 1932, *passim*, *Manchester Guardian*, numerous articles in 1925-1928, especially December, 1926, *passim*; Herbert Rosinski, *The German Army*, New York, 1940, pp. 166-238; Knight-Patterson (Kulski), *Germany from Defeat to Conquest: 1918-1933*, London, 1943, pp. 297-403; Lt. Col. Wm. R. Kintner, "Russia, Courting Germany Again, Remembers Rapallo," *The Washington Post*, January 2, 1949; Col. T. H. Minshall, *Future Germany*, London, 1943, pp. 35#; John B. White, *Red Russia Arms*, London, 1932, *passim*, Walter G. Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service*, New York, 1939, p. 6; Henry C. Wolfe, *The Imperial Soviets*, New York, 1940, pp. 7-32; "X," "Russia and Germany: Political and Military Reflections," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 2, January, 1942, pp. 303-323; Lt. Col. Grigory A. Tokaev, *Stalin Means War*, London, 1951, p. 25; and G. R. Treviranus, *Revolutions in Russia*, New York, 1944, p. 202. In many cases disputes arose over distribution, and each side accused the other of alleged infractions of agreements.
69. Cf. Vladimir N. Ipatieff, *The Life of a Chemist*, Stanford, 1946, pp. 350#; and a letter from Ipatieff to this author, dated April 14, 1949, in which he described the difficulties encountered in this sphere. He was at that time the chief Soviet chemist in these joint projects with Germany.
70. According to Berchin and Ben-Horin (as cited by Hittle, *op. cit.*, p. 247), "Groups of 100 superior officers of the Red Army were sent to Berlin each year for military instruction." Hittle goes on to say that "Practically all of the Red Army's high command participated in this educational program."
71. Barmine, in an interview with this author.
72. Cf. Kryvelev, *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 2, 1947, pp. 124#.
73. *Bolshevik*, editorial, No. 5, March, 1944, p. 15.
74. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, p. 21.
75. Cited by Col. Louis B. Ely (USA) in *The Red Army Today*, Harrisburg, 1949, p. 10.
76. *Ibid.*
77. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 36.
78. In this study considerable use has been made of the *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav RKKA*, 1936 (PU-36) ("Provisional Field Regulations of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army"), Moscow, 1937, 215 pp. (hereinafter cited as *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936); the *Polevoi Ustav Krasnoi Armii*, 1940 Goda ("Field Regulations of the Red Army, 1940"), projected, Moscow,

1940, 366 pp. (hereinafter cited as *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940); *Polevoi Ustav Krasnoi Armii* (“Field Regulations of the Red Army”), projected, Moscow, 1944, 395 pp. (hereinafter cited as *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944); the *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty Krasnoi Armii* (“Infantry Combat Regulations of the Red Army”), Vol. 1 (Soldier, Squad, Platoon, Company), 267 pp., and Vol. 2 (Battalion, Regiment), 1942, 293 pp. (reissued in 1943, 1944, and 1945 without change; not known to have been superseded) (hereinafter cited as *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, 1942–1945); and also of combat regulations and manuals of the other arms and services, which include specific points of doctrine.

79. *The Statesman's Year Book*, S. H. Steinberg (ed.), New York, 1950, p. 1429, accepts this report.

CHAPTER 4 *The Principle of the Offensive, and Defense*

1. Quoted by Petrovsky, in *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1922, p. 6; and by Khrustov, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
2. Quoted by Sergei N. Kournakoff, *Russia's Fighting Forces*, New York, 1942, p. 61.
3. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 21, 1929, pp. 319-320.
4. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 19.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 4, letter of July 18, 1920. Later, on January 14, 1921, he suggested a regular Red Army under the Comintern (*ibid.*, p. 77).
6. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, pp. 11-12, par. 10; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi: Tezisy K Teoreticheskoi Konferentsii po Taktike* ("Offensive Combat: Theses for a Theoretical Conference on Tactics"), November 26, 1942, p. 2; *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 12.
7. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 9-10, par. 2; italics in the original.
8. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 8.
9. Interviews held by this author with two field-grade Soviet officers, and examination of 1940-1941 Soviet training schedules.
10. Brigade Comdr. A. N. Lapchinsky, *Vozdushnaia Armiia* ("The Air Army"), Moscow, 1939, p. 73.
11. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942-1945, p. 8; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, pp. 8-9.
12. *Taktika Aviatsii* ("Aviation Tactics"), Moscow, 1940, p. 55. This textbook contains a useful summary of Red Army doctrine prepared for Air Force students.
13. Lt. Gen. M. Burshtynovich, "Bases of Offensive Battle of a Rifle Regiment and Battalion," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 1, January, 1947, p. 5.
14. This is further discussed in Chap. 8. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 124, gives the figure of four or five battalions to one enemy battalion.
15. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 64, gives this estimate on the duration of preparation, and it is supported by other evidence.
16. Col. N. Pavlenko, "Concerning the Scale of Strategic Offensive Operations," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, pp. 3-18. Col. K. Lavrov states this also in "The Rear Services of a Front in an Offensive Operation," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, pp. 40-41.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
18. *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 6.
19. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 25.

20. Maj. Gen. M. S. Kniazev, *Oborona Strelkogo Korpusa* ("Defense of a Rifle Corps"), Moscow, 1940, p. 3.
21. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, pp. 3-4.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 10; Maj. Gen. Fomichenko, *The Red Army*, London, 1945, pp. 15-22; Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, pp. 36-37.
23. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, pp. 123-124.
24. *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 6.
25. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 132, par. 224; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 199; see also *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942-1945, p. 203, par. 614.
26. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 132, par. 224; and in the 1940 *Polevoi Ustav*, p. 215, par. 455.
27. *Boevoi Ustav*, 1942-1945, Vols. 1 and 2, p. 9; see also *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 13, par. 14.
28. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 215, par. 455; and p. 250, par. 505.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 32, par. 46.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 247-248, pars. 500-501.
31. Shilovsky, *L'Art Militaire*, pp. 13 and 23.
32. Gen. Blumentritt, quoted by B. H. Liddell Hart in *The German Generals Talk*, New York, 1948, p. 176. Dittmar is cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 8, November, 1950, p. 81. Hart makes this point also in "Was Russia Close to Defeat?" *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, July, 1950, p. 12.
33. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 7.
34. Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradom* ("The Battle of Stalingrad"), Moscow, 1944, p. 31; a study by members of the Historical Division of the General Staff.
35. Korkodinov, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.
36. "Russia's Fighting Methods and Ability as Seen by the German Wehrmacht," *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, February, 1947, p. 96 (from an official German "Leaflet on the Peculiarities of Russian Methods of Combat"); and "Russian Tactics," *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 8, November, 1948, p. 86.
37. *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 1948, p. 96; and "Russian and German Tactics in World War II," *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 6, September, 1949, pp. 100-102 (based on an article by a former German battalion commander on the Soviet front).
38. See Kniazev, *Oborona Strelkogo Korpusa*, *passim*-, A. N. De Lazari, *Aktivnaia Oborona Korpusa* ("Active Defense of a Corps"), Moscow, 1940, 141 pp.; and Col. N. N. Liubimov, *Oborona SD i Deisiviia Artillerii* ("Defense of a Rifle Division and Artillery Action"), Moscow, 1941, 167 pp.
39. *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy RKKA (BUK-38)* ("Combat Regulations of the Cavalry of the Red Army, BUK-38"), Part I, Moscow, 1941, p. 91, par. 386.
40. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 9; Vol. 2, p. 12, par. 5, also states: "Defense, as a rule, must be active ...;" see also *Oboronitel'nyi Boi* ("Defensive Combat"), February, 1943, 75 pp.; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 10.

41. Shilovsky, *L'Art Militaire*, p. 32.
42. Cf. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 7; and Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, pp. 23-24.
43. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 149, par. 248.
44. S. Serov, "On Counterattacks," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 10, May 25, 1948, p. 31.
45. Stalin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1947, p. 8.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 16. This article followed Stalin's ■ writing of his letter to Col. Razin but preceded its publication.
48. Bulganin, *Tridtsat' Let*, pp. 13–44; and Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 43.
49. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 24, is a good example.
50. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 4 and 15.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
52. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 22.

CHAPTER 5 *The Principles of Maneuver and Initiative*

1. Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 43.
2. Cited in Khrustov, *op. cit.*, p. 29. This aim of “annihilation” is discussed in Chap. 9 of this study.
3. F. Ogorodnikov, “The Strategy of the Red Army in a Foreign War,” *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 93.
4. Trotsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, pp. 207 and 223.
5. Quoted in Petrovsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1922, p. 5.
6. Trotsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 207.
7. N. Kakurin, *Volkovskoe Srazhenie* (“The Volkov Engagement”), Moscow-Leningrad, 1927, p. 74.
8. See Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 44; M. Stroeve, “The Role of Aviation in Questions of Tactics of the Future,” *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1923, p. 145; and S. Pokrovsky, “The Operational Activity of Aviation,” *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 5, 1923, p. 154.
9. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 105.
10. Marshal M. Tukhachevsky, “On the New Field Regulations of the RKKA,” *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, May, 1937, pp. 46–47. This was written only a month before his execution, but the military ideas expressed here were never repudiated.
11. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 6. Max Werner, in *The Military Strength of the Powers*, London, 1939, *passim*, stressed this as a great advantage to Soviet doctrine and commanders, but he seriously overestimated this advantage, as later events were to show.
12. Trotsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 227.
13. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 92, par. 208; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 14.
14. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 8; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 10.
15. Burshtynovich, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 1, 1947, p. 5.
16. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
17. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 30 and 33.
18. M. Bragin, in *Orel, The July Battle 1943*, Moscow, 1943, p. 15; italics added.
19. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
20. Maj. S. Shestak, “Surprise, Military Cunning, Initiative,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1948, p. 28.

21. Cf. Marshal K. Voroshilov, *Ready For Defense*1. (Report to the 17th Congress of the CPSU [B]), New York, 1934, p. 48.
22. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 10–11, par. 6.
23. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 93, par. 208.
24. Frunze, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 1, 1929, p. 193.
25. Maj. Gen. P. G. Egorov, “Mobility,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 10, October, 1940, p. 84.
26. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 105.
27. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; and Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 5.
28. Maj. Gen. A. Subbotin, “On the Peculiarities of Command in Contemporary Offensive Operations,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1946, p. 5; and Maj. Gen. S. Bronevsky, “On Operational Pursuit,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, p. 30. Tempo of advance is discussed in detail in Chap. 8.
29. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 84, par. 142.
30. *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy*, 1941, p. 14, par. 19.
31. Cited in an editorial of the *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota* (“Herald of the Air Fleet”), No. 11, June, 1945, p. 1.
32. Lt. Gen. S. Perevertkin, “Success in Combat,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, May, 1948, p. 19. He lists activity, surprise, and initiative as three of the seven qualities needed for success.
33. Frunze, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 1, 1929, p. 417.
34. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
35. Col. Ya. Potekhin, “Activity in Defense,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 12, June, 1948, p. 22.
36. Pukhovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
37. Cf. Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin, *Udar Nebyvaloi Sily* (“A Blow of Unprecedented Strength”) [the offensive of 1945], Moscow, 1948, pp. 7-8, and Maj. Gen. Nikolai Talensky, *Pravda*, February 2, 1951, for examples of this point.
38. Cited by Kournakoff, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
39. Cited by Brigade Comdr. M. S. Kniazev, *Bor'ba v Pozitsionnykh Usloviakh* (“Position Warfare”), Moscow, 1939, pp. 19-20.
40. Cf. N. Viktorov, “Views on Fortifications,” *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1922, pp. 63-65, for a reflection of the uncertainty over the role of fortified places.
41. Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, p. 48.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 56. Tukhachevsky stressed this last point as a basic innovation of the 1936 *Regulations*.
43. Cf. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 252, par. 508.
44. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War*, p. 96; Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, P. 23.
45. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 15, par. 7.
46. N. I. Tikhonov, in *The Defense of Leningrad*, London, n.d., p. 113.

47. M. Bogatov and V. Merkur'ev, *Leningradskaia Artilleriia* ("Leningrad's Artillery"), Leningrad, 1946, p. 57.
48. Col. A. Lebedev, "Permanent Defense Systems in the Light of War Experiences," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1945.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 6 *Forms of Offensive Maneuver*

1. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 106, par. 234; *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty* (BUP-38), Vol. 1, 1942, p. 11, par. 5; *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty* (BUP-42), Vol. 1, 1942–1945, p. 17, par. 12; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, 1942, p. 2; and *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 56.
2. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
3. Cf. Lt. Gen. D. Alekseev, "Maneuver by Small Rifle Units in Offensive Combat," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 13, July, 1948, p. 7.
4. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 16, par. 9.
5. Use of multiple attacks is often credited to Gen. Brusilov in the Galician operation of 1916; cf. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 27, and Redkin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 66. This writer has seen but one case where Brusilov's breakthrough was regarded unfavorably in recent Soviet writings—Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 3–4.
6. Zamiatin, in *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 4, April, 1944, as quoted by Alexander Werth in *The Year of Stalingrad*, New York, 1947, p. 350.
7. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
8. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 27.
9. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 3.
10. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 3, p. 9.
11. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 8; repeated in the *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 8.
12. Voroshilov, in *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, pp. 42–43, describes the frontal blow at some length but without contributing to the usual understanding of the term.
13. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 5. Note that, mirroring their concern with unity of plan and structure, this is taken for comment rather than the more obvious effect of a breach in the enemy line of defense.
14. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 19; italics in the original.
15. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 3. The internal quotation in the last line is from NKO Order No. 306.
16. Lt. Gen. P. Yarchevsky, "Breakthrough of Tactical Defense," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, p. 19.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 20 and 26.
19. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl.*, No. 5, 1945.
20. Yarchevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 19.
21. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10–11, 1944, p. 19.

22. *Ibid.*, see also Talensky, *Bol'shevik*. No. 3, 1946, p. 32.
23. Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin, "The Salient Thrust," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1945.
24. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 109; cf. also Kryvelev, *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 2, 1947, pp. 136-137.
25. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 23; cf. also Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' Sokrushitel'nykh Udarov* ("The Ten Crushing Blows"), Moscow, 1945, p. 3. This is a publication of the Historical Division of the General Staff.
26. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 16, par. 9; p. 96, par. 164; p. 63, par. 112; p. 100, par. 172. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 3, p. 10, paraphrases the last of these passages. Cf. also Gapich, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1940, p. 95.
27. Col. A. I. Starunin, "Battle in Encirclement," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 10, October, 1940, p. 86.
28. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, p. 19; Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; and Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin, *Berlinskaia Operatsiia* ("The Berlin Operation"), Moscow, 1949, p. 17.
29. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 13; see also pp. 10, 132, and 134 for these examples.
30. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, pp. 96-97.
31. The basic source for these figures is Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1946, p. 31. In many cases comparison with German figures was made. The chief discrepancy is in the vagueness of the size of divisions. See also Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, pp. 19-20, and Zamiatin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945, for a brief discussion of these encirclement operations. Stalin, on November 6, 1944, declared that 30 German divisions were cut off in Latvia (between Tukums and Libau); apparently the Soviets were later compelled to reduce this estimate by two-thirds.
32. Maj. Gen. N. Beliaev, "Liquidating Large Scale Encircled Groupings," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1946, p. 13.
33. In *Stalingrad*, London, 1943, pp. 10-11.
34. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 42; and Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25 (direct quotation from the latter source).
35. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 14-15.
36. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.
37. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 42.
38. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' Sokrushitel'nykh Udarov*, p. 111.
39. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942-1945, pp. 170 and 171, pars. 492 and 495.
40. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 10.
41. Maj. Gen. N. Talensky, "The Red Army's Operational Tactics" (a translation from some issue of *Voennaia Mysl'* of 1945; original not available).
42. Lt. Gen. P. Yarchevsky, "The Encirclement Operation," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1945.
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*

46. Col. V. M. Lozovoi-Shevchenko, "The Action of Aviation in Encircling the Enemy," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 1, January, 1947, p. 20.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
48. Beliaev, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 11.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Similar data are also given for the Korsun operation.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 20 and 27, and see *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 2.
51. *Morskoi Sbornik*, editorial, No. 8, August, 1938, p. 19.
52. P. G. Egorev, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 10, 1940, p. 85.
53. Col. V. F. Vorob'ev, *Tobol'sko-Petropavlovskaiia Operatsiia* ("The Tobolsk-Petropavlovsk Operation" [1919]), Moscow, 1939, p. 80.
54. V. Mikulin, "Perspectives on the Organization and Conduct of Long-Distance (Strategic) Cavalry Reconnaissance," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1923, p. 101.
55. Telegram No. 678/op of November 24, 1919, cited by Marshal K. Voroshilov in "Stalin and the Construction of the Red Army," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 1, January, 1940, p. 13.
56. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 11; see also *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 223, par. 408, and Col. Rizin, "Carry the Attack Through to the End!" *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 1, 1942.
57. In *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 1947, p. 96.
58. Directive No. 10726 to the commanders of Orel and Voronezh, dated October 9, 1919. Cited by Voroshilov in *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 1, 1940, p. 12.
59. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 101, par. 173.
60. Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, p. 54.
61. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 14, and Vol. 2, p. 10; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 2; Starunin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 10, 1940, p. 86; and *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942-1945, p. 170, par. 492.
62. I. Korotkov, in *Strategy and Tactics of the Soviet-German War*, London, 1942, p. 18; a compilation of articles by Soviet officers and correspondents.
63. *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 1947, p. 96.
64. Gen. Franz von Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 6, entry for August 7, 1941 (unpublished manuscript).
65. Shilovsky, *L'Art Militaire*, p. 12.
66. Cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 1947, p. 96.
67. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 174.
68. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, from pars. 141–143 on pp. 83-84.
69. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942-1945, p. 198, par. 589.

CHAPTER 7 *The Principles of the Concentration and Economy of Force*

1. Cf. B. Brodie, "Strategy as a Science," *World Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 4, July, 1949, pp. 469–470; and Maurice, *Principles of Strategy*, pp. 106–126.
2. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, FM 100-5, 1944, p. 33, par. 118.
3. Bogatov and Merkur'ev, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
4. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*. No. 24, 1949, p. 37.
5. Cited from Directive No. 11144/op of October 20, 1919, by Voroshilov, in *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 1, 1940, p. 13.
6. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 6.
7. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 96; italics in the original. Although the quotation immediately above is postwar and this one prewar, in this instance it does not mark a change in doctrine.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
9. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 60, par. 107.
10. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, 1942, p. 23.
11. Col. Gen. V. I. Kazakov, "Stalinist Artillery Day," Moscow Radio, November 18, 1951.
12. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 53; the figure given here is from 35 to 40 per cent; General Augustin Guillaume (French Army), *Soviet Arms and Soviet Power*, Washington, 1949, pp. 154–155, says that during the war this figure rose from 15 to 50 per cent of the combat forces.
14. Data all found in Col. Gen. F. A. Samsonov, "Artillery—The Main Striking Force of the Army," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, pp. 15–27. He compares this with United States and United Kingdom doctrine, as follows: The United Kingdom favors 1 gun to every 7 yards (6.4 meters); the United States, 1 gun to every 3 yards (2.8 meters); while the USSR "often exceeds" 1 gun to every 3–4 meters (p. 22).
15. Lt. Gen. I. S. Prochko, "The Combat Art of Soviet Artillerymen," *Artilleriskii Zhurnal* ("The Artillery Journal"), No. 10–11, October–November, 1946, *passim*; *Vooruzhennye Sily SSSR v Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine* ("The Armed Forces of the USSR in the Great Fatherland War"), Moscow, 1949, p. 71; "Thirty Years of the Soviet Army" (editorial), *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, February, 1948, *passim*; "Five Years after the Victory over Fascist Germany" (editorial), *Voprosy Is/or/i*, No. 5, May, 1950, p. 7. See also Bogatov and Merkur'ev, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradom*, p. 12; and Col. Gen. V. I. Kazakov, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, No. 108, 1946 (as given in "Soviet Artillery in the Berlin Operation," *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 5, August, 1950, p. 92; translated into density per kilometer from density per mile). Lt. Col. I. V. Parot'kin, *Osvobozhdenie Zapadnoi JJkrainy* ("Liberation of the Western

Ukraine”), Moscow, 1945, p. 9, states that artillery concentration in the Western Ukraine in 1944 averaged 200 guns per kilometer. Non-Soviet sources give yet higher figures: Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 154, states that the density per mile of front of “artillery and heavy mortars” was 460 at Orel-Kursk; 330 at Karelia (Leningrad); 400 at Jassy-Kishinev; and 975 at Berlin. Lt. Col. C. Berteil, in *Revue Militaire d’Information*, April 25, 1951 (as cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 31, No. 7, October, 1951, p. 76) gives the figures of 480 guns per mile at Stalingrad; 500 at Korsun-Shevchenkovsky; and 990 at Berlin.

16. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 153; and Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 55–57.
17. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 12, par. 7; *Polevoi JJstav*, 1940, p. 298, par. 629; and *Nastupatel’nyi Boi*, p. 41.
18. Cf. especially Maj. Gen. N. Solodovnik, “Special Points of the Field Regulations of the Army of the USA,” *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 8, August, 1946, p. 75. General Marshall’s Biennial Reports were also used in this article. The Soviet “tank corps” of pre-1946 was the equivalent of our armored division and has in fact been redesignated the “tank division” since 1946. They did use tanks in larger mass than the Americans, but their entire land army was proportionately larger.
19. Maj. Gen. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradom*, p. 45, gives the figure of 12 tanks per kilometer, i.e., 41.5 per mile. Berteil, cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 31, No. 7, 1951, p. 76, gives 40 to 64 tanks per mile at Stalingrad, 97 at Kursk, and 320 “armored vehicles” per mile at Stettin.
20. *Vooruzhennye Sily SSSR*, p. 72; *Bol’shevik*, editorial, No. 3, 1948, and *Voprosy Istorii*, editorial, No. 5, 1950, p. 7, give the figure as 6300 tanks. A. S. Antonov *et al.*, *Tank* (“The Tank”), Moscow, 1947, p. 12, give the figure as 4000 at Berlin, as does the article “Soviet Aviation in the Battle for Berlin,” *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 6, September, 1948 (based on an article by a Soviet colonel, Luchkin, who gives Marshal Zhukov as the
21. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 66, par. 116.
22. Col. Gen. T. Khriukin, “Soviet Aviation over East Prussia,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 11, June, 1945, p. 7; Lt. Col. G. Pshenianik, “Mass Aviation Action on the Approaches to East Prussia,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 22, November, 1944, p. 18.
23. Col. G. Kariakin, as quoted in *Air Age*, June, 1943, p. 73.
24. Khriukin, *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 11, 1945, p. 7.
25. Col. Gen. P. Zhigarev, “Air Force Day,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 8, August, 1947, p. 5; and Marshal F. A. Astakhov, “The Soviet Air Force,” *Slaviane*, No. 8, August, 1947, *passim*-, and see “The Soviet Conquest of East Prussia,” *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 12, March, 1950, p. 78.
26. Maj. Gen. E. Vorob’ev, “How To Teach Flyers the Art of ‘Reading’ the Field of Battle from the Air,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 1, January, 1946, p. 23.
27. Lt. Gen. F. Agal’tsov, “The Stalinist Air Fleet,” *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 16, 1950. This figure is also given in *Bol’shevik*, editorial, No. 3, 1948; *Vooruzhennye Sily SSSR*, p. 72; *Voprosy Istorii*, editorial, No. 5, May, 1950, p. 7; and “The Great Victory” (editorial), *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 4, April, 1949, p. 4; *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 6, 1948, p. 95, cites Soviet Col. Luchkin as giving the figure of 4000 to 5000 aircraft.
28. An anonymous high-ranking German military source, writing after the war in the West.

29. *Ibid.*
30. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-143.
31. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 21, 1929, p. 319.
32. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, pp. 17-18.
33. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 10, par. 3; and p. 94, par. 163; *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 18; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 15, par. 6.
34. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 96 (cf. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 6, 1947, p. 157).
35. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 25-26.
36. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, pp. 15 and 93; italics mine.
37. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
38. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 25-26.
39. Zamiatin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 4, 1944 (see Chap. 6, footnote 6); Yarchevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; and Talensky as cited by Werth in *The Year of Stalingrad*, p. 349.
40. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 10.
41. Lt. Gen. Sir G. Martel (UK), *An Outspoken Soldier-. His Views and Memoirs*, London, 1949, p. 227.
42. "The Soviet Army: Assets and Failings of the Ground Forces," *Times* (London), October 6, 1950, p. 7.
43. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 10.
44. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 40.
45. *NastupateVnyi Boi*, p. 12. Examples are given on pp. 12-14.
46. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 26-27. The only exception given is the offensive of General Brusilov in Galicia in 1916, which struck along a 400-kilometer front.
47. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, 1947, pp. 163 and 164; italics mine.
48. Stalin's words have been often repeated, although this alone would not, of course, in itself mean that they were operative in Soviet military strategy. For some explicit references to this passage from Stalin as the basis of military strategy, see Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel'*, p. 128; Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25; Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 24; Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, p. 15; Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 15; and Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradorn*, p. 41.
49. The clear, precedent statements of this idea by Clausewitz and von Schlieffen are totally ignored. Maj. Gen. Korkodinov (*Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 22-23), who states that Stalin merely gave the conception "new content," credits Lloyd and Leer (the latter a Russian theoretician) with this idea. Galatinov (*Strategicheskaiia Tsel'*, p. 122) notes Jomini's statement of this idea. In one case Maj. Gen. Murav'ev (*Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 1, 1944, p. 17) terms this "a Leninist teaching."
50. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, 1947, pp. 173-174. (This is from the 1923 article cited above.)

51. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25. (Translation altered slightly after comparison with the Russian edition: *Novoe Vremia*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25.)
52. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, pp. 30-31, par. 45; see also *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 16.
53. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
54. Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel'*, p. 128.
55. Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo*, The Rand Series, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1951, p. 27, cites this quotation and discusses the "main link" in the Bolshevik political code.
56. Cited by Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
57. *Ibid.*
58. See Garthoff, *World Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1951, *passim*.
59. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 16 and 121; Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*. No. 9, 1937, p. 56; Yarchevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; Col. Gen. P. Chanchibadze, "On the Bases of Offensive Combat of the Infantry Regiment and Division," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1945, p. 20; Col. Gen. K. Galitsky, "Some Questions on the Breakthrough in Positional Defense," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 20, October, 1945, p. 7; Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25; and Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 24.
60. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 10, par. 3; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 15, par. 6.
61. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 18.
62. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 26.
63. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
64. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 14.
65. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 59-60, par. 106; p. 60, par. 107; p. 61, par. 109; and p. 62, par. 110.
66. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 219, par. 463. See also pp. 109-111, pars. 239-244, for restatement of their offensive missions; and see *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, pp. 19-20, and Vols. 2 and 3, p. 10,
67. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 3, p. 17,
68. *Taktika Aviatsii*, pp. 57-58, in its excellent summary of ground-force doctrine.
69. *Boevoi Ustav Istrebitel'noi Aviatsii (BUIA-40)*, 1940, p. 17, par. 49; Lt. Col. A. Kravtsov, "Aerial Combat by Fighter Groups," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 5, May, 1947, p. 16.
70. *Boevoi Ustav Istrebitel'noi Aviatsii (BUIA-40)*, 1940, p. 17, par. 49.
71. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 6, italics mine; see also Maj. Gen. V. Fedorov, "Changes in the Form of Combat Formations in The Fatherland War," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 17, September, 1945, pp. 14-18; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 7.
72. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, pp. 4-5; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 6; and Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
73. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 15.

CHAPTER 8 *The Principles of Momentum of Advance and of Consolidation*

1. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 21, 1929, p. 320.
2. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 6, 1947, p. 159.
3. Burshtynovich, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 1, 1947, p. 6.
4. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 43.
5. Zamiatin, *Berlinskaia Operatsiia*, p. 4.
6. Maj. Gen. V. N. Evstigneev, *Razgrom Imperialisticheskoi Iaponii Na Dal'nem Vostoke v 1945 Godu* ("The Defeat of Imperialist Japan in the Far East in 1945"), Moscow, 1951, p. 18.
7. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; see also Lt. Col. V. Pavlenko and Maj. B. Korol', "Tempos in Breakthrough Operations," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, October 13, 1944.
8. Col. N. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 13.
9. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 124.
10. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10–11, 1944, p. 15.
11. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 110, par. 243; p. 147, par. 306.
12. Perevertkin, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, 1943, p. 19.
13. Stalin, *On The Great Patriotic War*, p. 144.
14. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
15. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10–11, 1944, pp. 14–15.
16. -----, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1946, p. 28.
17. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 23. He stated the same thing in a lecture broadcast on Radio Moscow on December 17, 1949.
18. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, pp. 6–7.
19. Varin, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, pp. 5–12.
20. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 16, gives the first figure for the average, and Burshtynovich, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 1, 1947, p. 6, gives the two examples. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradom*, p. 48, give the figure of 5 to 16 kilometers per day for the infantry.
21. Cf. Yarchevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945, and *Voennaia Mysl'* No. 9, 1946, *passim*, for discussions of this matter.
22. Bronevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1946, p. 30; Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 5; Antonov *et al.*, *Tank*, p. 11. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalin-gradom*, p. 48, give the average

tempo for infantry advance as 20 kilometers per day and for advance in general as 30 to 33 kilometers per day.

23. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 13 and 16; Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 14; and Col. Gen. V. Vol'sky, "Peculiarities of Tank Operations in Encirclement," *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Me khanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, June, 1945, p. 4.
24. The particular illustrative quotations used came from the following regulations: (1) > (3), and (4), *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 121, par. 203; (2), *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 304, par. 644; (5), *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 202, par. 412, and *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942–1945, p. 195, par. 580; and (6), *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, p. 195, par. 580.
25. Lt. Gen. S. Perevertkin, "Pursuit of the Enemy," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1948, p. 6.
26. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
27. O. Gorodovikov, *Konnitsa v Otechestvennoi Voine* ("Cavalry in the Fatherland War"), Moscow, 1942, p. 71.
28. Order of December 18, 1941, to the Central Front, cited by Albert Parry in *Russian Cavalcade: A Military Record*, New York, 1944, p. 228.
29. Cited by Bronevsky, *Voennaia Mysl*, No. 5, 1946, pp. 32–33.
30. TASS, January 6, 1951.
31. Col. P. Sergeev, "Aviation in Pursuit of the Enemy," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 19-20, November-December, 1945, pp. 16-20.
32. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 194, par. 405; *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy RKKK*, 1941, p. 90, par. 310; and *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942-1945, p. 197, par. 586.
33. Bronevsky, *Voennaia Mysl*, No. 5, 1946, p. 34; see also Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl*, No. 5, 1945.
34. Bronevsky, *Voennaia Mysl*, No. 5, 1946, p. 34. Other discussions of parallel pursuit are found in Gorodovikov, *op. cit.*, especially p. 72; Lt. Gen. E. A. Shilovsky, *Razgrom Nemetskykh Voisk V Belorussii* ("The Defeat of the German Troops in Belorussia"), Moscow, 1945, p. 23. (A General Staff study.)
35. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
36. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
37. J. V. Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma* ("Problems of Leninism"), 10th ed., Moscow, 1940, pp. 336–337; italicized as in the original.
38. -----, *Leninism*, Vol. 2, London, Modern Books, n.d., p. 360.
39. -----, *On the Great Patriotic War*, pp. 143–144.

CHAPTER 9 *The Principle of Annihilation*

1. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 7, 1947, pp. 261-262.
2. G. Girs, "The Tasks of Science and Military Doctrine in Connection with Our Experiencing the Revolutionary Epoch," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiis*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 48.
3. Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*, Moscow, 1940, p. 131 (stated in 1926).
4. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 19, par. 13.
5. Lenin's annotations to Clausewitz' *On War*, previously cited (see Chap. 3, footnote 59), demonstrate this clearly.
6. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, pp. 16 and 44.
7. V. Putna, purged in 1937, pointed this out well in his book *K Visle i Obratno* ("To the Vistula and Back"), Moscow, 1927. Stalin was one of those chiefly responsible for this error.
8. L. S. Amiragov, "On the Military Theoretical Heritage of Marx-Engels-Lenin," *Voina i Revoliutsiia*, No. 1, January—February, 1934, p. 64.
9. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 9, par. 2, and p. 120, par. 201; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 9, par. 2, and p. 24, par. 33; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, 1942, p. 1; *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 16; *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty (BUP-38)*, 1942, p. 9, par. 1.
10. In addition to the references in the footnote above, see Gorodovikov, *op. cit.*, p. 71, and Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbomik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 14.
11. *Rukovodstvo po Podgotovke K Rukopashnomu Boiu Krasnoi Armii* ("Manual on Preparation of the Red Army for Hand-to-Hand Combat"), Moscow, 1941, p. 5, par. 1.
12. Col. A. I. Pokryshkin, *Kril'ia Istrebitelia* ("The Wings of a Fighter"), Moscow, 1948, p. 5; italics mine.
13. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, pp. 8–9; p. 14, par. 6; italics in the original.
14. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1946, p. 32.
15. Alekseev, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 13, 1948, p. 6.
16. Lt. Gen. E. A. Shilovsky, Maj. Gen. N. A. Talensky, and Col. A. V. Vasil'ev, *Vostochno-Prusskaia Operatsiia Krasnoi Armii 1945 g.* ("The East-Prussian Operation of the Red Army of 1945"), Moscow, 1946, p. 20.
17. Varin, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 5–17; *ibid.*, Vol. 2, 1921, pp. 5–12; italics in the original.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 8–9.
19. For a few examples, see the General Staff study by Maj. Gen. N. M. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' Sokrushitel'nykh Udarov, passim*, the *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, Vol. 52, 1948, col. 717; and Vorob'ev, *Tovarishch Stalin, passim*.

20. Both of whom so termed these operations in their speeches at the time of Stalin's seventieth birthday celebration; see Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 37, and Shtemenko, TASS broadcast, Moscow, Home Service, December 21, 1949.
21. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, 1945 (see Chap. 6, footnote 41); italics mine.
22. The first such statement was made by Malenkov, on the thirty-second anniversary of the Revolution; *Bol'shevik*, No. 21, November, 1949, p. 11. Also, cf. Molotov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, December, 1949, p. 21; Mikoyan, *Pravda*, March 11, 1950; Maj. Gen. N. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 11, June, 1951, p. 36; Beria, *Bol'shevik*, No. 21, November, 1951, *passim*; Malenkov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 19, October, 1952, p. 21; Beria, October 7, 1952 (reported by Radio Moscow, October 8, 1952); and Deputy Premier M. G. Pervukhin, *Pravda*, November 7, 1952.
23. Khrustov, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
24. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942-1945, p. 144, par. 422; entire passage italicized in the original.
25. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 194, par. 406; entire passage italicized in the original.
26. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk v Gorakh*, p. 149, par. 537; Col. Rizin, "Carry the Attack to the Very End," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 1, 1942; Chanchibadze, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, 1945, p. 24.
27. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 26; italics mine.
28. M. Frunze, *Izbrannye Proizvedeniia*, Moscow, 1940, p. 97; and Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 21, 1929, p. 319.

CHAPTER 10 *Retreat*

1. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 27, 1930, p. 69.
2. -----, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 22, 1929, pp. 402 and 408.
3. -----, *Selected Works*, New York, n.d., Vol. 7, p. 358; italics mine. (Speech delivered on May 9, 1918.)
4. -----, in *Sedmoi S'ezd Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii* ("Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party"), stenographic account (March 6–8, 1918), Central Committee, Moscow, 1923, pp. 126 and 129.
5. Stalin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 3, 1947, p. 6.
6. -----, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 6, 1947, p. 160.
7. -----, *History of the CPSU(B)*, p. 96 (see also p. 89).
8. Talensky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 7; italics mine.
9. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 8.
10. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 8.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 293–303, pars. 640–661.
12. Stalin, *History of the CPSU(B)*, pp. 257–258.
13. Ogorodnikov, in *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 96.
14. Maj. Gen. B. K. Kolchigin, "Withdrawal from Battle," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1940, p. 94.
15. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 97–98.
16. Cf. Appendix II for detailed data, evidence, and discussion.
17. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
18. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 9.
19. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 275, par. 568.
20. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 154, par. 257. Repeated in the 1940 *Polevoi Ustav*, p. 275, par. 567; the *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, 1942–1945, Vol. 1, p. 219, par. 629, and Vol. 2, p. 87, par. 241, p. 54, par. 133, and p. 249, par. 777; the 1944 *Polevoi Ustav*, p. 11, and pp. 293–303, pars. 640–661.
21. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 10, and Vol. 2, p. 257, par. 800, state this explicitly.
22. Prohibitions on surrender are discussed in detail in Chap. 14.
23. K. Nevezhin, "Flight of a Field Army and Means of Restoring Combat Capability," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1922, pp. 35–48.

24. The maneuvers did not include withdrawal. See N. Muralov, "Autumn Maneuvers of the M.V.O.," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 5, 1922, p. 20-29.

CHAPTER 11 *Reserves*

1. Riazanov, in *Voina i Voennoe Iskusstvo V Svete Istoricheskogo Materializma*, p. 22.
2. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 5, 1947, p. 108 (August 28, 1921).
3. -----, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 7, 1947, p. 26 (January 27, 1925).
4. For example, see Varin, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, pp. 5–12; and Nevezhin, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1922, pp. 35–48.
5. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 26.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 55; italics in the original.
7. Bulganin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 68.
8. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10–11, 1944, p. 15.
9. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 41.
10. Cf. "Russian Artillery—1941–1945," *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 10, January, 1948, p. 106 (from an article by Lt. Col. H. de Watteville [UK]).
11. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
12. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 55, states some of these missions explicitly.
13. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 5; *Polevoi XJstav*, 1944, p. 6; see also *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 60, par. 106, for an early statement.
14. Kniazev, *Oborona Strelkogo Korpusa*, p. 36.
15. Serov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 10, 1948, p. 31.
16. Cited in *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, pp. 27–28.

CHAPTER 12 *The Principles of Unity and Combined Arms*

1. Quoted in White, *The Growth of the Red Army*, p. 161.
2. For example, the phrase cited is taken from Voroshilov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 1, 1940, p. 10.
3. For two recent commentaries on the development of monolithism in the Communist Party and the Soviet state, see Julian Towster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R., 1917-1947*, New York, 1948; and Barrington Moore, Jr., *Soviet Politics—The Dilemma of Power*, Cambridge, 1950.
4. Lenin, *Isbrannye Proizvedeniia* ("Selected Works"), Moscow, 2d ed., 1940, p. 442.
5. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
6. For example, see Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 112; and Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 7, 1947, p. 57.
7. Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, p. 19.
8. For earlier attacks, see Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, p. 46; and against stress on the strategic air force, see Zhuravlev, "Operational Concentrations," *Voina i Revoliutsiia*, November—December, 1935, and Entch, "Foreign Opinion on the Role of Aviation in Modern Warfare," *Voina i Revoliutsiia*, September-October, 1935 (both cited in Werner, *op. cit.*, p. 114); and Lapchinsky, *Vozdushnaia Armiia*, *passim*.
9. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, pp. 20-21.
10. Vershinin, *Pravda*, July 17, 1949.
11. Voroshilov, in *The Red Army Today*, p. 12.
12. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 22.
13. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 11, par. 7; italics in the original.
14. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 14, par. 20.
15. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 10, par. 4, italics in the original; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 12, par. 13, and p. 135, par. 287; and *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 9.
16. Talensky, in *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, p. 20, makes an explicit statement of Soviet successes.
17. The Soviets allege that United States military doctrine fails to appreciate duly the importance of combined-arms cooperation. Cf. I. Petrov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 5, March, 1948; and Solodovnik, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, *passim*.
18. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 166, par. 193.
19. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 139, par. 291.
20. Maj. Gen. N. I. Gapich, *Sluzhba Sviazi v Osnovnykh Vidakh Obshchevoiskogo Boia* ("Communication Service in Combined Arms Combat"), Moscow, 1940, p. 18.

21. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
22. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 7.
23. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviiam Bombardirovochnoi Aviatsii*, 1942, p. 83, par. 202.
24. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 310, par. 662.
25. Cited by Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
26. Rear Admiral V. Belli, "Combined Action of the Fleet with Ground Troops," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, p. 40.

CHAPTER 13 *Leadership, Planning, and Command*

1. For examples containing these phrases, see Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' Sokrushitel'nykh Udarov*, p. 11; Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*. No. 24, 1949, p. 42; and Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, P. 24.
2. "A German View of the Soviet Air Force," *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April, 1949, p. 77 (from an article by Lt. Gen. H. J. Rieckhoff, formerly of the German Air Force).
3. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
4. Voroshilov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 1, 1940, p. 17.
5. G. Malenkov, "Comrade Stalin—The Leader of Progressive Mankind," *Bol'shevik*. No. 24, December, 1949, p. 9; and V. Molotov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, December, 1949, p. 21.
6. Bulganin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 71.
7. M. Kaganovich, "Stalin Leads Us to the Triumph of Communism," *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 63; italics mine.
8. Col. I. S. Baz', *Istochniki Voennogo Mogushchestva Sovetskogo Soiuza* ("Sources of the Military Might of the Soviet Union"), Moscow, 1947, pp. 82–83.
9. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 21.
10. Bulganin, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 69.
11. *Ibid.*; italics mine.
12. Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, New York, 1948, p. 891.
13. Winston S. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, Vol. 4, Boston, 1950, p. 482.
14. Reported by M. Koriakov, "October 16 [1941]," *Novy Zhurnal* ("The New Journal"), New York, Vol. 21, 1949, p. 172.
15. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 43.
16. *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, Vol. 65, *The USSR*, Moscow, 1948. This article is 8680 words long, and the total number of mentions of Stalin's name is itself small; in most cases his name was used in quoting from his wartime statements, as a narrator rather than as a participant. The article was written by I. Razgon; Voroshilov was the only military man on the board of editors.
17. The strongest claim, that he "carried out the plan," is made in a USSR Home Service Radio broadcast of March 15, 1951.
18. Bulganin, *Bolshevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 68; italics mine.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia*, supplementary volume, *The USSR*, Moscow, 1948; italics mine.

21. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 47.
22. Voroshilov, *Bolshevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 36; and Army General Sergei Shtemenko, TASS broadcast to the provincial press, December 20, 1949. Marshal Vasilevsky, writing at the same time (*Krasnaia Zvezda*, December 21, 1949) mentions Stalin in connection with *no* specific operations.
23. Bulganin, *Bol shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 69.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
25. Reported by Col. Ya. G. Bronin and Col. A. V. Yaroslavtsev, *Bronetankovye i Mekhanizirovannye Voiska Sovetskoi Armii* ("Tank and Mechanized Troops of the Soviet Army"), Moscow, 1948, pp. 24–25.
26. Marshal K. Vershinin, "The Soviet Union—A Great Air Power," *Pravda*, July 18, 1948.
27. Bulganin, *Bol shevik*, No. 24, 1949, pp. 66–67.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 71–72.
29. Maj. Gen. John Deane (USA), *The Strange Alliance*, New York, 1947, p. 108.
30. Gen. H. H. Arnold (USA), *Global Mission*, New York, 1949, p. 467.
31. Bulganin, *Bol shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 71.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 67 and 71.
33. Deane, *op. cit.*, pp. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, New York, 1948, p. 460; and Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 591.
34. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 24.
35. Isaac Deutscher, in *Stalin: A Political Biography*, New York, 1949, pp. 495–496, advances a similar interpretation of Politburo decision-making. Former Lt. Col. G. A. Tokaev has also described his session with the Politburo (as an expert on German rocket and jet development), which confirms this explanation (in *Stalin Means War*, London, 1951, pp. 91–118).
36. Lt. Col. J. D. Hittle (USMC) has written the best existing account of the history of the Russian and Soviet General Staff in *The Military Staff*, rev. ed., Harrisburg, 1949, pp. 199–262.
37. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 116, reports the nonexistence of a General Staff corps.
38. Deane, *op. cit.*, p. 260.
39. Shaposhnikov, *Mozg Armii*, Vol. 1, Voennyi Vestnik, Moscow, 1927, 259 pp.; Vol. 2, Gosizdat, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, 263 pp.; Vol. 3, Gosizdat, Moscow-Leningrad, 1929, 379 pp. (It is not known whether the projected fourth volume was ever published; it was not available for this study.)
40. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 197.
41. Jolles' translation of Clausewitz' *On War*, p. 488.
42. Hittle, *op. cit.*, p. 253, includes the Fortified Areas Administration, which has been abolished. The following brief discussion draws heavily on Hittle. Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 316–317, purports to give the organization as of 1939, but it does not appear to be correct.
43. Stalin, as quoted by Tukhachevsky in *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, p. 51.

44. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
45. Lt. Gen. P. A. Firsov, *Razgrom Nemetsko-Fashistskykh Zakhvatchikov pod Moskvoy* ("The Defeat of the German Fascist Invaders Before Moscow"), Moscow, 1950, p. 9.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
47. Winston S. Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, Boston, 1950, p. 457.
48. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 270.
49. Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*, p. 323.
50. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. 2, London, p. 81.
51. E. A. Shilovsky, "On the Technical Side of Directing Armies in the Civil War," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1922, pp. 13-27.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-26.
53. Frunze, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 3, 1929, p. 201.
54. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 73, par. 128.
55. Lt. Col. T. Prokhorenko and Major N. Pikalin, "Preparation of a Breakthrough," *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, June, 1945, p. 18.
56. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942–1945, p. 25, par. 24.
57. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 18, par. 12.
58. *Nastavlenie po Polevoi Sluzhbe Shtabov Krasnoi Armii* ("Manual on Field Service of Staffs of the Red Army," Moscow, 1942, p. 8, par. 5.
59. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 29, par. 42; italics in the original.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 29, par. 43.
61. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, pp. 6–7.
62. *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy RKKA* ("Cavalry Combat Regulations"), Vol. 2, 1942, p. 14, par. 19; italics in the original. Manuals of other arms state this also.
63. Col. P. Solntsev, "The Method of Working Out Decisions," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 4, April, 1946, p. 43.
64. Lt. Gen. Ya. Dashevsky and Maj. Gen. S. Bronevsky, "On the Method of Working Out Decisions," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, pp. 53 and 55-56.
65. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 73, par. 128.
66. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, pp. 9-10.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
68. Col. L. Merinov and Lt. Col. I. Romanenko, "The Staff of an Aviation Group in Offensive Operations," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 23–24, December, 1944, p. 17. (The context here is in the air force.)
69. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942–1945, p. 24, par. 24; italics in the original.
70. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 32-33.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
72. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 19, par. 12.
73. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942–1945, pp. 21–22, par. 20; italics in the original.
74. *Distsiplinarnyi Ustav Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR* (“Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1948, p. 5, par. 1, and p. 6, par. 6.
75. *Ustav Vnutrennei Sluzhby Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR* (“Internal Service Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1946, p. 181.
76. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War*, p. 136.
77. Lt. Col. A. Nabokikh, “Regulations of the Armed Forces—Firm Law for Military Men,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 4, February, 1950, p. 8; see also Lt. Col. I. Portiankin, “The Regulations and Manuals—The Law of a Soldier’s Life,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 1, January, 1949, pp. 38-43; and Col. M. Drozdov, “On the Morale Stature of a Soviet Officer,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 20, October, 1948, p. 15.
78. Maj. Gen. A. I. Kovalevsky, *Boevoi Put’ Sovetskoi Armii* (“The Battle Path of the Soviet Army”), Moscow, 1949, p. 159.
79. Baz’, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.
80. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 5, 1945.
81. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 7, 1946, p. 6.
82. *Ibid.*, pp. 3 and 4.
83. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 5, 1945.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Captain of the First Rank Yu. Kovel’ and Lt. Col. P. Utkin, “Operations of the Black Sea Fleet during the Summer-Fall Campaigns of 1944,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 42.
86. Vassili Grossman, *The Years of War (1941-1945)*, Moscow, 1946, p. 418.
87. *Nastupatel’nyi Boi*, p. 33.
88. *Ibid.*
89. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 5, 1945; italics mine.
90. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
92. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 18; see also *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 17, par. 11, and pp. 69-70, par. 123; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 13, par. 15, and p. 33, par. 49.
93. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
94. These quotations are taken, respectively, from the following sources: Pshenianik, “Mass Aviation Action on the Approaches to East Prussia,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 22, November, 1944, p. 16; Lt. Col. M. Krotov, “Fighter Cover for Attack and Bombing Aircraft,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 13-14, July, 1945, p. 9; Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 7, 1946, p. 6; and *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 73, par. 128; cf. also Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
95. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.

96. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
98. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
99. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 25, par. 35.
100. Gen. Alexei Markoff, "How Russia Almost Lost the War," *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, May 13, 1950, p. 177; and Enrique Delgado, *J'ai Perdu La Foi a Moscou* ("I Lost Faith in Moscow"), France, 1950, p. 140.
101. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
102. *Instruktsiia po Ispol'zovanniu Gruppy Upravleniia Strelkovoï Roty i Vzvoda* ("Instruction on the Use of Groups, Direction of a Rifle Company and Platoon"), Moscow, 1942, p. 1, pars. 1 and 2.
103. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 6.
104. *Ibid.*, p. 7; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, pp. 7-8. See also Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 99, for a brief statement of this change and its reasons.
105. *Nastavlenie po Polevoi Sluzhbe Shtabov Krasnoi Armii*, p. 9, pars. 8 and 10.
106. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-18, pars. 26-35. This marked the addition since the 1935 *Provisional Manual* of the Topographic Section and the Administrative-Economic Unit.
107. Col. N. M. Zamiatin, "Some Peculiarities of Organization and Work of the Operations Sections of a High Command Staff," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1940, p. 79.
108. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
109. Maj. Gen. M. Miasnikov, "Forms and Methods of Operational Preparation," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, pp. 37-47.
110. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
111. Brigade Comdr. N. I. Gapich, "Direction and Communications in a Rifle Division in Offensive Combat," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1940, pp. 95-103.
112. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, pp. 7-8.
113. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
114. *Nitzi-Nitzi*, Japan, December, 1938; *Posev* Calendar/or 1951; *Posev* ("Sowing"), Germany, No. 49, December 2, 1950, p. 15; and Beck and Godin (pseud.), *Russian Purge and the Extraction of Confession*, New York, 1951, p. 106.
115. These figures are generally agreed upon by former Soviet officials including Boris Souvaine, *Stalin*, New York, 1939, p. 635; Walter Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service*, New York, 1939, p. 177; Wollenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-264; Alexander Barmine, *One Who Survived*, New York, 1945, p. 322. White, *The Growth of the Red Army*, p. 384, also accepts these general figures. The alleged "Lt. Col. Cyrille [Kyril] Kalinov," *Les Mar-chaux Sovietiques Vous Parlent ...* ("The Soviet Marshals Speak ..."), Paris, 1950, pp. 20-21, gives the more modest estimate of twelve thousand purged, of whom three thousand were later rehabilitated.
116. See especially Lt. Col. Beskrovnyi, "The Suvorov System of Training and Teaching Troops," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, May 12, 1950, p. 2 (this article also includes other aspects of Suvorov's

training legacy); cf. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–117.

CHAPTER 14 *Morale, Political Controls, and the Soviet Soldier*

1. Grossman, *op. cit.*, p. 339.
2. Martel, *An Outspoken Soldier, His Views and Memoirs*, p. 224. He had been in the USSR to see the 1936 maneuvers and noted the same thing at that time; see p. 142.
3. Cited by Maj. Gen. J. F. C. Fuller (UK), in *The Second World War, 1939-1945: A Strategical and Tactical History*, New York, 1949, p. 305.
4. Cited by Hart in *The German Generals Talk*, p. 220.
5. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–19, gives a good description of this endurance.
6. Karmen, in *Stalingrad*, London, 1943, p. 84.
7. L. Pervomaisky, in *Orel*, p. 53.
8. J. V. Stalin, *O Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine Sovetskogo Soiuzu* (“On the Great Fatherland War of the Soviet Union”), 5th ed., Moscow, 1950, p. 41; hereinafter cited as *O Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine*.
9. Translated from *Ustav Vnutrennei Sluzhby Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuzu SSR* (“Internal Service Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1946, p. 181.
10. The text of one such oath is given in the pamphlet *We Are Guerrillas*, London, 1942, p. 9.
11. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 62; see also p. 53 and pp. 64–66.
12. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 40.
13. *Leadership, Courtesy and Drill*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 22–5, War Department, February, 1946, p. 5, par. 5.
14. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 40.
15. See Leonov, *op. cit.*, *passim*, for the fullest treatment of this general matter. Talensky, in *Bolshevik*, No. 3, 1946, p. 22, stresses the “just” war basis for high morale; also Khrustov, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
16. Cf. Varin, *Voennaia -Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 8–10.
17. See Murav'ev, *Morskoi Sbomik*, No. 1, 1944, p. 17, and Khrustov, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
18. Colonel Drozdov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 20, 1948, p. 13.
19. Cited by Voroshilov in *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 40.
20. Moscow Radio, Home Service, February 23, 1950; presented as an article by Chaikovsky, “The Man with the Rifle,” in *Krasnaia Zvezda*.

21. Col. N. Frenkel', *The Defence of Moscow*, Moscow, 1944, p. 10; see also Garnich, *Otechestvennaia Voina 1812 Goda, passim*, and Murav'ev, *Morskoi Sbomik*, No. 1, 1944, p. 20.
22. Moscow Radio, February 23, 1950 (see footnote 20, above).
23. Stalin, *O Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine*, pp. 100–101.
24. Passage in Jolles' translation of *On War*, by Carl von Clausewitz, pp. 72–73.
25. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 101; italics mine.
26. Murav'ev, *Morskoi Sbomik*, No. 1, 1944, p. 23.
27. *Voprosy Istorii*, editorial, No. 5, 1950, p. 11.
28. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 56, par. 95.
29. Cited by Col. P. Kashirin, *Partiia Lenina-Stalina Sozdatel' i Vozhd' Sovetskykh Vooruzhennykh Sil* ("The Party of Lenin and Stalin, Creator and Leader of the Soviet Armed Forces"), Moscow, 1948, p. 17.
30. "Military Commissars" (editorial), *Pravda*, December 14, 1939; also cited by Prof. I. I. Mints, in *The Red Army*, New York, 1943, pp. 73-74, as appearing in a "Manual for Regimental Commissars" and attributed to Stalin.
31. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 18, par. 13.
32. Neznamov, in *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1922, p. 130; see also Verkhovsky, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 196; and V. Egorev, in *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1922, p. 4.
33. *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 12; and Sliilovsky, *L'Art Militaire*, p. 4.
34. Broadcast by Moscow, Home Service, February 23, 1950 (see footnote 20 above).
35. *Leadership, Courtesy and Drill*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 22-5, 1946, p. 3, par. 3b.
36. G. Ugryumov, as reported in Louis Fischer and Boris Yakovlev (eds.), *Thirteen Who Pled*, New York, 1949, p. 216.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218.
38. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, p. 467.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 468.
40. "The Soviet Army: Assets and Failings of the Ground Forces," *Times* (London), October 6, 1950, p. 7.
41. Eisenhower, *op. cit.*, p. 468.
42. *Leadership, Courtesy and Drill*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 22-5, 1946, p. 19, par. 18<?.
43. For example, see the article "The Morale of Soviet Soldiers," by former Sr. Lt. P. Snegirev of the tank troops, in *Novoe Russkoe Slovo* ("The New Russian Word"), New York, January 23, 1951. He defected to the West late in 1949 after 10 years of service in the Soviet Army.
44. *Leadership, Courtesy and Drill*, U.S. Army Field Manual FM 22-5, 1946, p. 6, par. 6c.
45. For example, see Simonov and Krieger in *Stalingrad*, pp. 51 and 36-37; and B. Voyetekhov, *The Last Days of Sevastopol*, New York, 1943, p. 176.

46. Verkhovsky, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 190; see also Kakurin, *ibid.*, Vol. 2, 1921, pp. 163–176.
47. K. Platonov and L. Schwartz, *Ocherki Psikhologii Dlia Letchikov* (“Outline of Psychology For Flyers”), Moscow, 1948, pp. 9–11.
48. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
49. See Louis Nemzer, “The Kremlin’s Professional Staff: The ‘Apparatus’ of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the Soviet Union,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 44, No. 1., March, 1950, pp. 78–97, for a review of the organizational framework of this administration.
50. This is clearly stated in the *Ustav Vnutrennei Sluzhby Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR, 1946*, p. 29, par. 69.
51. Col. Gen. I. Shikin, “Party-Political Work in the Soviet Army,” *Partinaiia Zhizn’* (“Party Life”), No. 3, February, 1948, p. 22, cited by Nemzer, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
52. In *Krasnaia Zvezda*, June 25, 1948.
53. Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 45. See also Geronimus (ed.), *Marksizm-Leninizm o Voine i Armii*, p. 229; and *Grazhdanskaia Voina: Materialy po Istorii Krasnoi Armii* (“The Civil War: Materials on the History of the Red Army”), Vol. 1, Moscow, 1923, p. 9.
54. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 10, par. 7.
55. *Distsiplinarnyi Ustav Krasnoi Armii* (“Disciplinary Regulations of the Red Army”), Moscow, 1941; *Distsiplinarnyi Ustav Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR* (“Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1946, 1948, and 1950; and the *Ustav Vnutrennei Sluzhby Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR* (“Internal Service Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1946 and 1950.
56. Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 45.
57. V. Egorev, “The Combat Preparation of the Contemporary Infantry Soldier, and the Place in It of Close-Order Drill,” *Voennaia Mysl’ i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1923, pp. 105–110.
58. Col. Khitrov, “Drill Instruction and Upbringing,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 11, June, 1947, p. 13.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
60. *Stroevoi Ustav Vooruzhennykh Sil Soiuza SSR* (“Drill Regulations of the Armed Forces of the USSR”), Moscow, 1947, 192 pp.; and 1948, 189 pp.; *Stroevoi Ustav Pekhoty RKKA* (“Infantry Drill Regulations of the Red Army”), Moscow, 1938, 132 pp.; 1939, 132 pp.; and 1940, 134 pp.
61. Col. S. Ushakov, *Boevye Budni* (“Daily Combat”), Moscow, 1946, pp. 54–55; italics mine.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
63. Markoff, in *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 177.
64. *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 2, January, 1949, p. 7; No. 14, July, 1948, p. 4; No. 13, July, 1950, pp. 5–6; No. 16, August, 1948, p. 3; No. 21, November, 1948, p. 7; *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 10, October, 1947, p. 212; No. 7, July, 1948; *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 23, 1950, p. 2; *Slaviane*, No. 8, 1947; *Voprosy Istorii*, No. 5, 1950, p. 12; Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 107; Kashirin, *op. cit.*, p. 42;

Kovalevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 140; and Col. N. N. Bugaev, *Nasha Artilleriia* ("Our Artillery"), Moscow, 1949, p. 9.

65. General Marshall, "Third Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army," in *The War Reports of Marshall, Arnold, and King*, Philadelphia-New York, 1947, p. 279; this covers the period from December 7, 1941, through June 30, 1945.
66. *Voprosy Istorii*, editorial, No. 5, 1950, p. 12. As of April, 1948, the total was 7,170,910 decorations, according to Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
67. Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 279. Of these, 1,034,676 were Air Medals; and of the remainder, 34.5% went to the infantry, 34.1% to the air corps, 10.7% to the field artillery, and the rest to the other arms and services.
68. Kashirin, *op. cit.*, p. 42, and Kovalevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 140, give the former figure; *Voennyi Vestnik*, editorial, No. 2, January, 1949, p. 7, gives the higher figure.
69. Kashirin, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
70. For example, Col. Pokryshkin tells in his memoirs how he joined the Party "on suggestion" in 1942.
71. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942–1945, p. 28, par. 31; italicized and in capitals in the original.
72. *Voin Krasnoi Armii v Plen ne Sdaet'sia* ("Warriors of the Red Army Do Not Become Prisoners"), Leningrad, 1940, 14 pp.
73. Walter Kerr, *The Russian Army: Its Men, Its Leaders, and Its Battles*, New York, 1944, p. 140.
74. Eisenhower, *op. cit.*, pp. 468–469.
75. Order No. 270; cited by former Soviet army men now in the West, and in *Bor ba* ("Struggle"), U.S. Zone, Germany, Nos. 2-3, February-March, 1949.
76. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 6, July 12, 1941.
77. M. Bobrov, "The Terrible Silence of Russia," *Vozrozhdenie* ("Rebirth"), Paris, No. 5, September-October, 1949, p. 88.
78. Cf. Appendix II for further discussion and evidence.
79. Markoff, in *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 176.

CHAPTER 15 *Prediction, Intelligence, and Reconnaissance*

1. Pukhovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
2. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 7; italics mine.
3. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
5. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
6. Maj. Gen. A. I. Kovalevsky, *I. V. Stalin—Vdokhnovitel' i Organizator Pobed Sovetskogo Naroda V Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine* (“J. V. Stalin—Inspirer and Organizer of the Victories of the Soviet People in the Great Fatherland War”), Moscow, 1949, p. 3.
7. Leonov, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
9. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25.
10. TASS, broadcast in English Morse to Europe, February 2, 1950; cf. also Bragin, in *Stalingrad*, pp. 91–92. For similar statements regarding the Moscow and Kursk battles, cf. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 25.
11. Cf. Leites, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–4.
12. *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, FM 100-5, 1944, p. 36, par. 132.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Miasnikov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, pp. 38 and 37.
15. Zlobin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945; and cf. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 31.
16. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 27.
17. Cf. Garthoff, *World Politics*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1951, *passim*.
18. Galatinov, *Strategicheskaia Tsel'*, p. 128.
19. Quoted by L. Sabelev, *Khranit' Voennuiu Tainu* (“Safeguard Military Secrets”), Moscow, 1949, p. 9; italics in the original.
20. Varin, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 17.
21. Ogorodnikov, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 87.
22. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 8; see also p. 6.
23. V. Melikov, *Problema Strategicheskogo Razvertyvaniia po Opytu Mirovoi i Grazhdanskoi Voiny* (“The Problem of Strategic Development by the Experiences of the World and Civil Wars”), Vol. 1: *The World Imperialist War, 1914—1918*, Moscow, 1935, p. 11.

24. Cited in *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 27.
25. Stalin, *Leninism*, New York, 1942, p. 474.
26. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 494.
27. See Merle Fainsod, *International Socialism and the World War*, Harvard, 1935, p. 177; and A. L. P. Dennis, *The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia, 1917–1923*, New York, 1924, pp. 343–346.
28. In addition to the trials of Hiss, the Rosenbergs, Gold, and Greenglass, the confessions of Chambers, Bentley, Massing, and others, and the Fuchs case in England, there are some excellent accounts found in the following sources: *The Report of the Royal Commission*, Ottawa, 1946, 773 pp., of the Canadian spy case, and also memoirs of its chief informant, Igor Gouzenko, *The Iron Curtain*, New York, 1948, 279 pp.; Alexander Foote, *Handbook for Spies*, New York, 1949, *passim*, written by a former Soviet spy in Switzerland; Walter G. Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service*, New York, 1939, *passim*; Kirril M. Alexeev, "Why I Deserted the Soviet," *Saturday Evening Post*, June 29, 1948, pp. 18//; July 3, 1948, pp. 20//; July 10, 1948, pp. 30//, written by a former Soviet employee in the embassy in Mexico; Jan Valtin, *Out of the Night*, New York, 1941, 749 pp., by a former Communist agent; "The Sorge Spy Ring—A Case Study in International Espionage in the Far East," *The Congressional Record*, Vol. 94, Part 12, 81st Congress, February 10, 1949, Appendix, pp. A705—A723, the full text of a release by the Department of Defense; Hede Massing, *This Deception*, New York, 1951; Erich Kordt, *Nicht aus den Akten* ("Not from the Records"), Stuttgart, 1950. For earlier accounts, see Georges Agabekov, *OGPU: The Russian Secret Terror*, New York, 1931, *passim* (dubious reliability); Essad Bey, *OGPU: The Plot Against the World*, New York, 1933, *passim* (dubious reliability); Victor K. Kaledin, *The Moscow-Berlin Secret Service*, London, 1940, pp. 1–142 on the OGPU (unconfirmed, by a former Tsarist agent); Jan Valtin, "Communist Agent," *American Mercury*, Vol. 48, November, 1939, pp. 264–271. Other accounts are secondary ones, usually based on these. Kurt Singer, *Three Thousand Years of Espionage*, New York, 1948, pp. 307–322 and 354–380, contains interesting but unsubstantiated information.
29. Foote, *op. cit.*, pp. 113–115.
30. Cf. *The Congressional Record*, Vol. 95, February 10, 1949, Appendix, p. A719.
31. Foote, *op. cit.*, pp. 205–206.
32. Former Soviet officer, "Future War in the Conception of the USSR," *Chasovoi* ("The Sentinel"), No. 312, Brussels, October, 1951, p. 3.
33. Cf. Appendix I for the organizational relationships.
34. These statements appear in the *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 29, par. 34, italics in the original; and Col. E. I. Lavrov, *Tankovaia Razvedha* ("Tank Reconnaissance"), Moscow, 1940, p. 11; italics in the original.
35. E. I. Lavrov, *op. cit.*, p. 14; in Russian: "*Boi dlia razvedka, a ni razvedka dlia boia.*"
36. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
37. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 30.
38. Prokhorenko and Pikalin, *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, 1945, p. 16; italics mine.

39. *Nochnye Deistviia Aviatsii* ("Night Air Operations"), Moscow, 1942, p. 38; italicized in the original.
40. Maj. Gen. Ya. N. Ishchenko, *Razvedka Zimoi* ("Winter Reconnaissance"), 3d ed., Moscow, 1946, p. 108.
41. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 90, par. 154.
42. *Rukovodstvo po Nazemnoi Razvedke* ("Manual on Ground Reconnaissance"), Moscow, 1941, p. 5, par. 2.
43. Parot'kin, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
44. Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 143; see Chap. 23 for the role of the partisans.
45. From a Soviet field order.

CHAPTER 16 *Deception, Surprise, and Security*

1. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 12, 1929, p. 16.
2. Hans Speier, *Social Order and the Risks of War*, New York, 1952, pp. 433//.
3. K. V. Bobrov *et al.*, *Maskirovka* ("Camouflage"), Moscow, 1941, pp. 15-16.
4. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 8; italics mine. See also Brigade Comdr. F. I. Trukhin, "Regrouping of an Army on the Flank," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1940, p. 20; and Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 17.
5. Trukhin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1940, p. 20; italics mine.
6. In *Military Review*, Vol. 26, No. 11, 1947, p. 96.
7. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 100, par. 171.
8. Former Imperial General Staff Col. S. Kamenev pointed out the value of feints in an article on "Chance or Conformity to Principle," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1923, pp. 63-66, in which he sought to demonstrate that "the shortest military distance to some target is not necessarily a straight line."
9. *Indications of Soviet Russian Breakthrough Attacks*, Foreign Armies East, No. 7290/44, August 28, 1944, signed by Guderian. A third influence was also mentioned, "The Development of the Situation on Other Fronts."
10. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.
11. Deane, *op. cit.*, p. 146.
12. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
13. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
14. Col. M. Paramonov, "The Use of Tank Ambushes," *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 4-5, May, 1945. See also Maj. V. Sviatkovsky, "The Organization of Tank Ambushes in the Mountains and in Wooded Terrains," *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, June, 1945, pp. 25-27; and *Strategy and Tactics of the Soviet-German War*, London, 1942, pp. 19-20.
15. Paramonov, *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 4-5, 1945.
16. Sviatkovsky, *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, 1945, p. 25.
17. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.
19. E. Yasin, "Aviation Camouflage," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, October 29, 1940.
20. See Pokrovsky, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 5, 1923, p. 155, for an example.
21. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 124, par. 207; italics in the original.

22. Bobrov *et al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 and 31.
23. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 76, par. 154.
24. N. Yatsuk, "Fundamental Principles of Field Camouflage," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 230-241. His theory was later elaborated in an article, "Contemporary Means of Military Field Camouflage," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1923, pp. 88-104.
25. S. O. Maizel', *Svetomaskirovka i Maskirovka* ("Light Discipline and Camouflage"), Moscow, 1942, 69 pp., pointed out the necessary controls in great detail. Other sources indicate a high degree of compliance.
26. Cf. *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 6, 1949, p. 102, and Vol. 29, No. 9, 1949, p. 103; and an anonymous high-ranking German military source.
27. Subbotin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1946, p. 8.
28. Bobrov *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
29. Marshal I. T. Peresypkin, *Voiska Sviazi Sovetskoi Armii* ("Signal Troops of the Soviet Army"), Moscow, 1948, p. 85.
30. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 21, 1929, p. 320.
31. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 100, par. 172, italics mine; and p. 62, par. 111.
32. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 93.
33. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 13, par. 16.
34. A. Vol'ne, "Surprise," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 2, February, 1937, pp. 3-34; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 32, par. 48. Cf. also Maj. P. S. Boldyrev, "Night Attack in the Mountains," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1940, p. 100.
35. Maj. Gen. A. Vlasenko, "Surprise in Battle," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 13, July, 1948, p. 13. See also, for earlier statements, *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 62, par. III, and pp. 10-11, par. 6; and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, pp. 32-33, par. 48.
36. Vlasenko, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 13, 1948, p. 13.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 15; Maj. S. Shestak, "Surprise, Military Cunning, Initiative," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1948, p. 28.
38. Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
39. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War*, p. 45.
40. Isayev, *New Times*, No. 52, 1949, p. 22. Slight alteration has been made in translation to conform to the Russian edition (*Novoe Vremia*, No. 52, 1949, p. 22).
41. Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' SokrushiteVnykh Udarov*, p. 119.
42. Lt. Col. V. Pavlov and Maj. B. Korol', "Tempos in Break-through Operations," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, October 13, 1944. Cf. also Parot'kin, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 47; and Zamiatin *et al.*, *Bitva pod Stalingradom*, p. 43; both of these are official publications of the Historical Division of the General Staff.
43. Baz', *op. cit.*, p. 78.
44. Col. P. Grigorenko, "Surprise Attack," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 1, January, 1946, p. 5.

45. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 11, par. 6; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 14, par. 16.
46. L. Sabelev, *Khranit' Voennuiu Tainu* ("Preserve Military Secrets"), Moscow, 1949, p. 25; italics mine. The State Secrets Act of 1947 added "information on discoveries, inventions and improvements of a non-military nature" to previous specific prohibitions in order to cover explicitly all scientific and technical work.

CHAPTER 17 *Preparation, Training, and Improvisation*

1. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 20, par. 17.
2. Maj. Gen. N. Talensky, "The Mighty Army of the Soviet Union," *Bol'shevik*, No. 3-4, 1944, p. 20.
3. See Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 493; Foote, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-115; and *The Congressional Record*, Vol. 95, February 10, 1949, Appendix p. A719, for the Defense Department account of the Sorge espionage case in Tokyo.
4. B. H. Liddell Hart, *Defence of the West*, London, 1950, pp. 162-163.
5. See Col. Gen. B. Korobkov, "Tankists of the Soviet Army," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 16, August, 1948, pp. 1-3.
6. Stalin. *On the Great Patriotic War*, p. 144.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
8. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 46; see also Miasnikov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, p. 40.
9. Maj. Gen. Smirnov and Col. Soborov, "Lecturing on the Tactics of the WS," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 10, October, 1949, p. 30.
10. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 42 and 43; italics mine.
11. Chanchibadze, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, 1945, p. 18.
12. Tikhonov *et al.*, *The Defence of Leningrad*, pp. 106-107.
13. K. Simonov, in *Orel*, p. 30.
14. See Kournakoff, *op. cit.*, p. 143; W. Mehring, *Timoshenko*, New York, 1942, pp. 101-110.
15. Col. Norikov, "The Company Sandbox," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 12, June, 1948, *passim*; Maj. N. Ostroumov, "Combined Operation of Attack Aircraft with Tanks in the Orsha-Vitebsk Operation," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 18, September, 1944, p. 7.
16. Miasnikov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1946, pp. 37-47.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
20. Lt. Gen. P. Vechny, "Military-Historical Field Maneuvers," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1946, p. 28.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
22. A. Svechin, "Military Games," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1923, pp. 76-80; see also the editorial "Tactical Tasks," *ibid.*, Vol. 5, 1922, pp. 107-111; V. Egorev, "On the Preparation of

Commanders,” *ibid.*, Vol. 4, 1922, pp. 86–96; and N. Muralov, “Autumn Maneuvers of the M. V. O. [Moscow Military District],” *ibid.*, Vol. 5, 1922, pp. 20–29 (Frunze has been credited with the initiative for these maneuvers); Vechny, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 7, 1946, p. 28.

23. V. Egorev, *Voennaia Mysl’ i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1922, p. 96; cf. also Muralov, *Voennaia Mysl’ i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 5, 1922, p. 28.
24. Egorev, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
25. Vechny, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 7, 1946, p. 29.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Haider, “Diary: Campaign in Russia,” Vol. 6, July 12, 1941.
28. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
29. “The Soviet Air Force,” *The Aeroplane*, August 6 and 20, 1948 (as cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 12, March, 1949, p. 87).
30. Former Russian staff officer, “The Soviet Air Force: Postwar Reorganization,” *Manchester Guardian*, June 23, 1950. See *Aviation Age*, Vol. 16, No. 1, July, 1951, pp. 55–57, for a review of Soviet air training.
31. For two claims of general resourcefulness, see Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–37, and Kournakoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 142 and 148.
32. Col. A. V. Vasil’ev, in *Vostochno-Prusskaia Operatsiia Krasnoi Armii 1945 G.*, p. 42.

CHAPTER 18 *The Importance of the Rear*

1. Voroshilov, *Bol'shevik*, No. 24, 1949, p. 39. This has apparently become the authoritative statement. Col. M. Zhuravkov, in a recent (*Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 17, 1950, p. 62) criticism of the 1949 edition of Col. P. Chuvikov's book, *Marksistko-Leninskoe Uchenie O Voine i Armii*, says that he failed to mention certain elements of this conception, which Zhuravkov then lists—a list identical with the one in Voroshilov's passage. For other brief discussions of “the rear,” see Bulganin, *Tritsatsf Let*, p. 18; Murav'ev, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 1, 1944, p. 18; “The Mighty Army of the Land of Victorious Socialism” (editorial), *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 2, January, 1949, p. 3; Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10–11, 1944, p. 18; Galatinov, *Strategicheskaiia Tsel'*, pp. 128–129; Leonov, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–55; and the controversial Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–59 and 83.
2. Chuvikov, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
3. M. V. Frunze, *Isbrannye Proizvedeniia* (“Selected Works”), Moscow, 1940, p. 60 (written in 1925).
4. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol. 4, October 30, 1918, p. 150.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 284, repeated in almost identical words; *ibid.*, p. 323.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 323. Note the high positive value attached to “compactness” and the reason for this value.
7. J. V. Stalin, *O Trekh Osobennostiakh Krasnoi Armii* (“On the Three Peculiarities of the Red Army”), Moscow, 1949 (reissue), pp. 6–7.
8. Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*, p. 590.
9. Stalin, *On The Great Patriotic War*, p. 19.
10. For example, see V. F. Vorob'ev, *Tovarishch Stalin*, p. 36.
11. Lt. Gen. M. Zagiū, “Some Problems of the Rear,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, p. 41.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
13. Col. K. Lavrov, “The Rear of a Front in an Offensive Operation,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 45.
14. Zagiū, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 49.
15. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 133, par. 279.
16. K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 47.
17. Zagiū, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 46.
18. K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 46.
19. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 134, par. 284.
20. Col. P. N. Kalinovskiy, “Direction of the Army Rear,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, August, 1940, p. 73.
21. K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 42.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
24. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
25. K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 41.
26. Interviews with former Soviet officers conducted by the author.
27. Marshal of Aviation Novikov is rumored to have been relieved for this cause. One former Soviet officer interviewed stated that he knew of cases of junior officers' doing this in the names of Novikov and other generals. Army General Khrulev, present Chief of the Rear of the Soviet Army, was rumored to have been involved in one scandal on the Northwest Front early in the war.
28. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 310; K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 51.
29. K. Lavrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 51.
30. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 16-17.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
33. Quoted by Hart in *The German Generals Talk*, p. 226.
34. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, in *U.S. News and World Report*, February 9, 1951, p. 22.
35. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 471.
36. Martel, *op. cit.*, p. 226.
37. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
38. Quoted in the *New York Times*, January 22, 1951, p. 18.
39. Cf. "The Soviet Army: Assets and Failings of the Ground Forces," *Times* (London), October 6, 1950.
40. Peresypkin, *Voiska Sviazi Sovetskoi Armii*, p. 13. These directives are credited to Stalin. See also Marshal I. T. Peresypkin, *Radio—Moguchee Sredstvo Oborony Strany* ("Radio—A Mighty Means of the Defense of the Country"), Moscow, 1948, 163 pp.
41. Miasnikov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1946, p. 37; see also Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 6.
42. This statement is based on incomplete data. Officially, the Soviets claim to have a record equalling that of the U.S. Army, namely, 73 per cent of recoveries and returns to active service (see Dr. N. Priorov [Red Army Medical Services] *Information Bulletin*, Embassy of the USSR, Washington, D.C., March 23, 1946, p. 245). This figure however, refers to recoveries in rear-area hospitals only; the great Soviet losses were primarily the consequence of inadequate front-line field collection and care.
43. For example, cf. J. V. Stalin, *Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Voters of the the Stalin Electoral Area of Moscow, February 9, 1946*, Embassy of the USSR, Washington, D.C., 1946; high productive rates are not verified but are plausible.

CHAPTER 19 *Soviet Employment of Ground Forces*

1. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 11, par. 7; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 15, par. 21, and p. 12, par. 13; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 21; *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942-1945, p. 11, par. 1.
2. Cf. the first two citations in the footnote above, and also Col. Gen. N. Berzarin, "Infantry and Its Role in Battle," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1945, pp. 2 and 3.
3. *Taktika Aviatsii*, pp. 13-14.
4. Pavlenko, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 6; and Baz', *op. cit.*, p. 79.
5. Radio Moscow, overseas broadcast, November 7, 1950.
6. Eisenhower, *op. cit.*, p. 467.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 466-468.
8. Cited, *inter alia*, by Lt. Gen. I. S. Prochko in *Artilleriia—Bog Voiny* ("Artillery—The God of War"), 3d ed., Moscow, 1946, pp. 4-5.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
10. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 11, par. 7.
11. Prochko, *Artilleriia—Bog Voiny*, p. 29.
12. A. Golubev, "The Obligation of the Infantry to the Artillery," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1923, p. 184. See also, for this dispute, D. Trizna, "What's the Matter?" *ibid.*, Vol. 2, 1923, pp. 176-183; I. Sokolovsky, "Regimental Artillery," *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 1923, pp. 59-66; and three articles by E. Smyslovsky, "Artillery in War," *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 209-229, "Accompanying Artillery," *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 1922, pp. 115-128, and "Our Immediate Artillery Tasks," *ibid.*, Vol. 1, 1924, pp. 146-160.
13. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 11-12, par. 7; italics in the original.
14. Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, p. 52. See also *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 12-13, par. 7.
15. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 122, par. 265. See also p. 16, par. 23, for the repetition of the basic mission of the artillery, and p. 127, par. 269, for another statement of it as the "decisive means" of support; and see p. 125, pars. 267 and 268.
16. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, par. 189.
17. Col. G. M. Pomeranstevev, in "The Principle of Artillery Firing," *Artilleriiskii Zhurnal*, No. 7, July, 1945, p. 37, made this illustrative statement.
18. Col. Gen. F. A. Samsonov, "Artillery Securing of Battle in the Depth of Enemy Defense," *Artilleriiskii Zhurnal*, No. 2-3, February, 1945, p. 8; see also *Obibchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 108.
19. See Chap. 7, footnotes 14 and 15.

20. Reported by Admiral Leahy, in the *Saturday Evening Post*, February 25, 1950.
21. *Artilleriiskoe Nastuplenie*, 1943, p. 1; repeated identically in *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 8, and in similar terms in *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942-1945, p. 8.
22. These stages are discussed briefly in *Artilleriiskoe Nastuplenie*, 1943, pp. 2-3; *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, pp. 34-40; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 8; and Bogatov and Merkur'ev, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25. See also Maj. Gen. (now Col. Gen.) F. A. Samsonov in *Artilleriiskoe Nastuplenie* (another publication by the same name), Moscow, 1942, pp. 5-12.
23. Bogatov and Merkur'ev, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 54; see also "Russian Artillery—1941-1945," *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 10, January, 1948, pp. 105–110.
26. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 55; Guillaume, *op. cit.*, p. 153; *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 12, 1950, p. 76.
27. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57; *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 10, 1948, *passim*.
28. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.
29. Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "The Role and Place of Self-Propelled Artillery in Modern Warfare," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1945.
30. Lt. Gen. I. S. Prochko, *Sovetskaia Artilleriia* ("Soviet Artillery"), Moscow, 1948, p. 44.
31. Bugaev, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17. (Col. Bugaev is an ordnance engineer in artillery.)
32. Interviews with former Soviet officers, including a captain of artillery.
33. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27; and interviews with former Soviet officers.
34. For wartime Soviet discussions, see Capt. V. S. Tokarsky, "Combat Order of an Anti-Aircraft Regiment Protecting Troops," *Artilleriiskii Zhurnal*, No. 4, April, 1943, *passim*-, Lt. Col. Sliusarev, "Defensive Air Operations," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 7, 1943; and Sr. Lt. Novokhato, "Repulsing Enemy Attack from the Air," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, August 3, 1943.
35. Col. Gen. F. A. Samsonov, "Artillery—The Main Striking Force of the Army," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1946, pp. 18–19.
36. For a standard history of the Soviet armored forces, see Bronin and Yaroslavtsev, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
37. Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-225.
38. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 12, par. 7; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 296, pars. 622 and 623, and p. 303, par. 642; *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 73; and Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, pp. 46–57.
39. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 71.
40. Tukhachevsky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 9, 1937, *passim*.
41. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 127, par. 270.
42. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 12–13, par. 7, and par. 188; *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 114.
43. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 6, July 31, 1941.
44. Cf. Appendix II for sources and further information.

45. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 41. This manual required that tanks should not separate themselves from the infantry by more than 200 to 400 meters.
46. "Soviet Employment of Armor," *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 10, January, 1949, pp. 95-97 (taken from an article by Gen. A. Niessel [French Army]).
47. Cf. Lt. Col. M. S. Davison (USA), "A Survey of Soviet Armor," *Armor*, Vol. 60, No. 2, March-April, 1951, pp. 34-40.
48. Maj. Gen. (now Col. Gen.) M. Katukov, *Boevye Deistviia Tankov* ("Tank Combat Actions"), Moscow, 1942, p. 15.
49. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 9; see also Rotmistrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945, *passim*; and Davison, *Armor*, Vol. 60, No. 2, 1951, *passim*.
50. Lt. Gen. G. Kovalev, "The Tank and Mechanized Troops of the Red Army," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 18, September, 1945, pp. 14-15.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-15.
54. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 297, par 624; see also p. 306, par. 649, and p. 308, par. 655.
55. *Boevoi Ustav Tankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk Krasnoi Armii*, Vol. 1, 1944, p. 257. For tactical examples, see Maj. A. S. Grigor'ev, *Sbornik Primerov po Takticheskoi Podgotovke Ekipazha Tanka* ("A Collection of Examples on the Tactical Training of Tank Crews"), Moscow, 1946, *passim*.
56. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 299, par. 631, and subsequent regulations.
57. Cf. Paramonov, *Zhumal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 4-5, 1945, *passim*.
58. E. I. Lavrov, *op. cit.*
59. Col. Gen. M. Katukov, "An Armored Brigade as an Advance Group," *Zhumal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 8, August, 1945, p. 7.
60. Marshal P. Rotmistrov, "Tanks—The Decisive Force of the Attack," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, August, 1946, p. 12; see also p. 4.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 5 and 7.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
65. Cf. Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, pp. 161-163.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169. This was also true before the war. One writer, Col. A. Ignat'ev, in *Tanki v Obshchevoiskovom Boiu* ("Tanks in Combined Troop Combat"), Moscow, 1939, *passim*, declared that "the regulations do not give stereotypes"; he then proceeded to outline almost mathematically the only prescribed tactical patterns: "on line," "corner forward" (V-wedge), "corner to the rear" (inverted wedge), and "echelon to the right (or left)."

67. Cf. Fomichenko, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
68. Katukov, *Zhumal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 8, 1945, p. 13.
69. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 28.
70. Cf. Rotmistrov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, 1945.
71. Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 44.
72. B. Shaposhnikov, "Massed Cavalry on the Flanks of an Army," *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 95-126, and Vol. 2, pp. 97-123.
73. "Theses of the Cavalry Section of the VNO [Military-Scientific Organization] of the Military Academy of the RKKA on Long Range (Strategic) Reconnaissance," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1924, pp. 110-111.
74. Voroshilov, *Ready For Defense!*, pp. 14-15.
75. Cf. *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy* (Combat Regulations of the Cavalry of the Red Army"), provisional, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1942, p. 6, par. 3.
76. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 13, par. 7; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 280, par. 576; and *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy*, Vol. 2, 1942, p. 1, par. 1.
77. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 280, par. 576.
78. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 7, June 17, 1942.
79. See Gorodovikov, *op. cit.*; Talensky, *Bol'shevik*, No. 10-11, 1944, pp. 19-20, Ely, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-78; and Maurice Hindus, *The Cossacks*, Garden City, New York, 1945, *passim*, for accounts of these and other Soviet cavalry actions. The reference to Haider's "Diary" is to the entry for June 17, 1942; see also the entry for June 16, 1942.
80. *Boevoi Ustav Konnitsy*, Vol. 2, 1942, p. 6, par. 2.
81. See *Nastavlenie po Inzhenernomu Delu Dlia Pekhoty RKKA* ("Manual on Engineering for the Infantry of the Red Army"), Moscow, 1940.
82. See *Nastavlenie Dlia Inzhenernykh Voisk\Podryvnye Raboty* ("Manual for Engineer Troops: Demolition Work"), Moscow, 1942, *passim*.
83. "The Battle of Kursk" *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 1, April, 1948, p. 75.
84. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
85. Maj. Gen. E. V. Sysoev *et al.*, *Voenno-Inzhenernoie Delo* ("Military Engineering"), Moscow, 1946, p. 15. See also Lt. Gen. N. Baranov, "Preparation of Engineer Units for General Troop Studies and Maneuvers," *Voenno-Inzhen-erny i Zhurnal* ("The Military Engineering Journal"), No. 7, July, 1946, pp. 1-3, for engineering training.

CHAPTER 20 *Soviet Employment of Airpower*

1. *Taktika Aviatsii*, 1940, p. 175.
2. Lt. Gen. B. Ushakov, "In the New Year," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota* ("Herald of the Air Fleet," hereafter in this chapter cited as *VVF*), No. 1, January, 1947, p. 25.
3. Col. A. Kravchenko, "Changes in Combat Formations of Soviet Fighters," *VVF*, No. 10, October, 1949, p. 7. Although this context concerns fighter aircraft, it is even more applicable to bombers.
4. Cited by L. Zacharoff in "The Red Air Fleet Two Years After," *Air Age*, June, 1943, p. 7.
5. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
6. Kravchenko, *VVF*, No. 10, 1949, p. 12.
7. Col. N. Fedorov, "Tactical Methods of Attack Planes Disorganizing the Enemy," *VVF*, No. 19–20, November–December, 1945, p. 40.
8. Cf. Asher Lee, *The Soviet Air Force*, New York, 1950, pp. 38–39.
9. Cf. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 78; and *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 110.
10. Maj. Gen. A. Zaitzev, "Aspects of Aviation and Its Combat Employment," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, May, 1946, p. 26.
11. Col. Gen. V. Sudets, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 29, 1948; italics mine. See also Maj. A. Surinov and Capt. V. Nikol'sky, *Taktika Aviatsii* ("Aviation Tactics"), Moscow, 1940, p. 3; Brigade Comdr. B. L. Teplinsky, *Osnovy Obshchei Taktiki Voennykh Vozdushnykh Sil* ("Fundamentals of General Air Force Tactics"), Moscow, 1940, p. 3; Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 71; Pshenianik, *VVF*, No. 22, 1944, p. 18; Col. B. Khariton, "Support or Operational Subordination?" *VVF*, No. 1, January, 1946, pp. 7 and 8; B. Ushakov, *VVF*, No. 1, 1947, p. 25; Maj. Gen. Zhuravlev, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, October 11, 1942; Col. N. Denisov, "The Offensive Power of Soviet Aviation," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, August 16 and 17, 1944; Col. Lozovoi-Shevchenko, "The Action of Aviation in Encircling the Enemy," *VVF*, No. 1, January, 1947, p. 20; and "Combat Experience—The Basis for Further Perfecting Military Mastery" (editorial), *VVF*, No. 11, June, 1945, p. 3.
12. See all references in the footnote above.
13. Denisov, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, August 17, 1944.
14. Cf. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vols. 1 and 2, 1942–1945, p. 8, and *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 9.
15. *Nastupatel'nyi Boi*, p. 18.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Khariton, *VVF*, No. 1, 1946, p. 7.
18. Interviews with several former high-ranking Soviet air force and ground force officers.

19. Interviews with several former high-ranking Soviet air force and ground force officers.
20. Interviews with several former high-ranking Soviet air force and ground force officers.
21. Interviews with several former high-ranking Soviet air force and ground force officers; see also Merinov and Romanenko, *VVF*, No. 23-24, December, 1944, p. 17.
22. Lt. Gen. E. Savitsky, "Cooperation between Fighter Aircraft and Tanks," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, November 28, 1945.
23. *Ibid.*; and interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
24. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
25. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
26. Ostroumov, *VVF*, No. 18, September, 1944, pp. 4-12.
27. *Ibid.*; quotations cited from pp. 4-12.
28. Col. E. Chalik, "Combat Aviation in the Penetration of a Defensive Zone," *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 18, 1940; and for a more recent restatement, see Col. A. Malinovsky, "On the Attack," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 14, July, 1948, p. 11.
29. Maj. B. Gel'man, "From the Experience of Ground Control for Air Navigation in Offensive Operations," *VVF*, No. 18, September, 1944, pp. 31-32.
30. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
31. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
32. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
33. *Nochnye Deistviia Aviatsii* ("Night Air Operations"), Moscow, 1942, p. 5.
34. *Instruktsiia po Organizatsii Sviazy v Aviasoedineniakh i Aviachastiakh* ("Instructions on the Organization of Communications in Air Formations and Units"), Moscow, 1943, pars. 71, 80, and 96.
35. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
36. *Instruktsiia po Organizatsii Sviazy v Aviasoedineniakh i Aviachastiakh*, 1943, par. 1.
37. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
38. Interviews with former high-ranking Soviet officers.
39. Katukov, *Zhumal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 8, 1945, p. 11.
40. "Observing the Russians at War," *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 2, May, 1948, p. 102 (from an article by Lt. Gen. Sir Noel MacFarlane).
41. Interviews with a number of former Soviet air force and ground force officers.
42. Grossman, *The Years of War, 1941-1945*, p. 3.
43. *Boevoi Ustav Istrebitel'noi Aviatsii Krasnoi Armii (BUIA-40)* ("Combat Regulations of Fighter Aviation of the Red Army"), Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, p. 5, pars. 1 and 3.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6, par. 5; and p. 8, par. 9.
45. Col. A. G. Ordin, *Vozdushnyi Flot Strany Sovetov* ("The Air Force of the Land of the Soviets"), 2d ed., Moscow, 1949, p. 36.

46. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
47. *Boevoi Ustav Istrebitel'noi Aviatsii Krasnoi Armii (BUIA-40)*, p. 14, par. 37; Surinov and Nikol'sky, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
48. *Vozdushnyi Boi Istrebitelei* ("Aerial Fighter Combat"), Moscow, 1942, p. 4.
49. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 64–65.
50. Kravchenko, *VVF*, No. 10, 1949, p. 11.
51. M. Krotov, *VVF*, No. 13–14, July, 1945, p. 11; Lt. Col. G. Suiakov, "Some Tactical Methods for Fighters," *VVF*, No. 1, January, 1944, p. 15; and interviews.
52. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58; italics mine.
54. Capt. I. P. Lipko, "Fighters over the Field of Battle," *VVF*, No. 10, May, 1943, pp. 20–23.
55. Lt. Col. A. Kuleshov, "The Defeat of German Aviation in the Battles North of Jassy," *VVF*, No. 18, September, 1944, p. 13; Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 68ff. As Pokryshkin wrote: "The free hunt quickly became the favorite form of action of the flyers of our unit." This may in part explain how, although Pokryshkin flew from 550 to 586 combat sorties during the war (at least 220 more than the nearest ace), he participated in only 137 to 144 "aerial battles." He downed 57 enemy planes.
56. Col. N. Vlasov, "Fighter Aviation in the Second World War," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 35.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
58. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviyam Shturmovo Aviatsii* ("Manual for Combat Action of Attack Aviation"), Moscow, 1942, p. 3, par. 1; and *Nastavlenie po Boevym Deistviyam Shturmovo Aviatsii* ("Manual for Combat Action of Attack Aviation"), Moscow, 1944, p. 7, par. 1; *Taktika Aviatsii*, 1940, p. 316; M. V. Shcherbakov and A. I. Bogdanov, *Taktika Shturmovo Aviatsii* ("Tactics of Attack Aviation"), Moscow, 1940, p. 84; Lozovoi-Shevchenko, *VVF*, No. 1, 1947, p. 18; Ostroumov, *VVF*, No. 18, 1944, pp. 4–12; Lt. Col. M. Borovkov, "Characteristics of Attack Aircraft Combat Flights in Winter," *WF*, No. 22, November, 1944, pp. 25–29; Lt. Col. F. Tiulenev, "Attack Aviation Action against an Enemy Airdrome," *VVF*, No. 4, April, 1948, pp. 10–15; and Lt. Col. I. Berezovoi and Lt. Col. I. Dunaev, "The Battle Experience of the First Guards Division of Attack Aviation in the Destruction of Enemy Forces Surrounded East of Minsk," *VVF*, No. 15–16, August, 1944, pp. 8–19.
59. The 1942 *Rukovodstvo* stated (p. 5, par. 6): "the number of attack planes together in one formation flight must not exceed six to eight aircraft; a group of less than six single seat aircraft, not covered by fighters, is insufficiently armed against an attack by enemy fighters."
60. Explicitly stated to be the basic forms of attack blows in the 1942 *Rukovodstvo*, p. 4, par. 3, and in the 1944 *Nastavlenie*, p. 16; and stated more recently by Lt. Col. N. Ostrov, "Means of Attack Aviation Action in the Offensive," *VVF*, No. 5, May, 1947, p. 8.
61. Zaitzev, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, 1946, p. 24.
62. Ostrov, *VVF*, No. 5, 1947, pp. 8–14, gives these examples.
63. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviyam Shturmovo Aviatsii*, 1944, p. 49, pars. 117–118.

64. Ostrov, *VVF*, No. 5, 1947, p. 12.
65. Cf. Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.
66. Maj. Gen. I. Krupsky and Lt. Col. V. Tomakov, "Combined Operations of Attack Planes with Mechanized Cavalry Mobile Groups," *VVF*, No. 3, February, 1945, pp. 13-18.
67. As cited by Col. A. V. Makovsky in "Aviation in Offensive Combat of a Rifle Corps," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1940, p. 45.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
69. Col. V. M. Lozovoi-Shevchenko, *Bor'ba s Aviatsiei Na Ee Aerodromakh* ("The Struggle with Aircraft on Airdromes"), Moscow, 1941, p. 35; italicized in the original. Although this was written in 1941, consistent wartime practice indicates its relevance today.
70. Cited in *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 373. For a contrary view, cf. Lt. Col. N. S. Buimov, "Bomber or Attack Operations of Aviation at Night," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1940, pp. 104-108.
71. Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, pp. 175-176.
72. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviyam Bombardirovobnoi Aviatsii* ("Manual for Combat Action of Bomber Aviation"), Moscow, 1942, p. 24, par. 58.
73. Lt. Col. N. Ostroumov, "The Concentrated Blow of Bombers on the Defense Point, Forst," *VVF*, No. 7, July, 1947, p. 10.
74. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviyam Bombardirovobnoi Aviatsii*, 1942, p. 34, par. 89; italicized in the original.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 27, par. 63.
76. Col. G. Chuchev, "Methods of Controlling Bombers in Air Offensives," *VVF*, No. 23-24, December, 1944, p. 21.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
78. V. V. Khripin, "The Air Force in Action," *Voina i Revoliutsiia*, No. 1, January-February, 1935, p. 73.
79. -----, speech of November 29, 1936, as cited by Max Beloff in *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, Vol. 2, 1936-1941, London, 1949, p. 64.
80. Cited in *Air Trails*, January, 1943, pp. 19 and 57.
81. See the editorial "The Creative Legacy of A. N. Lapchinsky," *VVF*, No. 6, June, 1948, pp. 60-61.
82. Lapchinsky, *Vozdushnaia Armiia*, p. 144.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
84. Cited in editorial of *VVF*, No. 6, June, 1948, p. 60.
85. Ya. Smushkevich, "Aviation in the Coming War," *Bol'shevik*. No. 4, February, 1938, p. 43.
86. Maj. Gen. P. P. Ionov, "Independent Air Operations of Strategic Significance," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, July, 1940, p. 47.
87. Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 31.
88. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 166, makes this point.

89. See "Red Falcons on the Wing," *Skyways*, October, 1943, p. 40.
90. Cf. Col. L. Vinogradov, "A Bomber Blow on a Railroad Station," *VVF*, No. 9, September, 1947, pp. 10–13.
91. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
92. Marshal K. Vershinin, "Soviet Aviation in the Battles for the Freedom and Independence of the Motherland," *VVF*, No. 2, February, 1948, p. 27.
93. *Rukovodstvo po Boevym Deistviyam Bombardirovochnoi Aviatsii*, 1942, p. 5, par. 7; italics mine.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 144, par. 353; italics in the original. Pages 143–166, pars. 351–414, concern ADD.
95. Col. Sergei Ushakov, *Boevye Budni* ("Daily Combat"), Moscow, 1946. This book contains many useful insights into the daily life of bomber air force personnel.
96. Cited by Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 177.
97. Former Russian staff officer, "The Soviet Air Force: Postwar Reorganization," *Manchester Guardian*, June 23, 1950.
98. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 469.
99. Cf. *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, London, 1949, Vol. 2, p. 617.
100. Moscow Radio, overseas to North America in English Morse, February 11, 1950.
101. Cf. Lt. Col. V. Chalikov, "On the Role of Strategic Aviation," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, September, 1946, pp. 81–84. This article is based on the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) report of October 21, 1945, and an article by General Spaatz in *Foreign Affairs*, April, 1946.
102. *Vozdushnaia Razvedka* ("Aerial Reconnaissance"), Moscow, 1942, p. 4.
103. Lipko, *VVF*, No. 10, 1943, pp. 20–23; Kuleshov, *VVF*, No. 18, 1944, p. 13; Lt. Col. A. I. Avdeev, "On Aerial Reconnaissance by Fighters," *VVF*, No. 7–8, April, 1943, pp. 13–17; Pokryshkin, *op. cit.*, p. 68; *Vozdushnaia Razvedka*, *passim*.
104. Interview with Pirogov.
105. Maj. N. Musatov, "Attack Aviation Support of Tanks in the Breakthrough of Enemy Defense," *VVF*, No. 8, August, 1947, p. 13; and Borovkov, *VVF*, No. 22, 1944, p. 28.
106. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 30, par. 34; *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu Vozdushno-Desantnykh Voisk Krasnoi Armii* ("Manual on the Combat Employment of Airborne Troops of the Red Army"), Moscow, 1941, p. 3, par. 3 (not known to have been superseded); hereinafter cited as *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu VDVKA*. This was already the case before the war; cf. *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, p. 88.
107. *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu VDVKA*, p. 3, par. 2.
108. V. Pronin, *Vozdushnye Desanty i Bor'ba s Nimi* ("Airborne Descents and the Struggle Against Them"), Moscow-Leningrad, 1941, pp. 9–10. Lee *op. cit.*, pp. 96–99, describes the early paratroop units; he incorrectly gives 1935 as the year of the Moscow-to-Vladivostok flight.
109. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 14, par. 7.
110. *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu VDVKA*, p. 3, par. 4.
111. *Ibid.*, p. 5, par. 12.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 30, par. 106; cf. also p. 5, par. 10.
113. *Ibid.*, p. 7, par. 16; and p. 31, par. 111.
114. *Ibid.*, p. 26, par. 86.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 30, par. 105.
116. *The Aeroplane*, August 20, 1948 (cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 12, 1949, pp. 90-91).
117. *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu VDVKA*, p. 31, par. 109; italicized in the original.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 34, pars. 118 and 119.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 27, par. 88 (all-weather); pp. 79-82, pars. 337-351 (terrain); and pp. 82-84, pars. 352-363 (winter). Lt. Gen. A. Gastilovich, in "From the Experience of Offensive Operations in a Mountain Theater," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 27, also stresses their value in mountain operations.
120. *Rukovodstvo po Boevomu Primeneniiu VDVKA*, p. 78, par. 327; see also pp. 78-79, pars. 328-336.
121. *Ibid.*, p. 70, par. 293.
122. *Ibid.*, p. 84, par. 314; cf. also pp. 84-85, pars. 365-368.
123. Surinov and Nikol'sky, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
124. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 108 and pp. 110-111.
125. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.
126. Pronin, *op. cit.*, p. 11; Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 104, erroneously cites this case as occurring in 1939.
127. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
128. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 108 and 114; *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 12, 1949, p. 91.
129. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
130. *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 12, 1949, p. 91; and Goudima, *op. cit.*, p. 383.
131. Col. Belyi and Col. A. Vasil'ev, "Paratroop Detachment Combat," *Voennyi Vest-nik*, No. 19, October, 1948, p. 11.
132. Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, p. 222.
133. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-111.
134. Yarchevsky, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 27.
135. *Taktika Aviatsii*, p. 190.
136. *Vremennaia Instruksiiia po Organizatsii Sviazi, Opoveshcheniia r Signalizatsii PVO na Promob'ektakh* ("Provisional Instructions for the Organization of Communications, Warnings, and Signaling for the PVO of Industrial Objectives"), Moscow, 1939, *passim*.
137. Vlasov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 29 and 32; a postwar Soviet air force defector; and an unidentifiable authoritative Soviet source in 1949.
138. Vlasov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1946, p. 32. Colonel Vlasov also states (p. 29) that in the First World War 8000 aircraft were shot down by other aircraft and only 2347 by ground antiaircraft fire.

139. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
140. Lt. Col. A. Safronov, "Combined Action of Fighter Aviation with Ground Means of Anti-Aircraft Defense (PVO) in Repelling Enemy Night Attacks," *VVF*, No. 22, November, 1944, p. 21.
141. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
142. Deane, *op. cit.*, pp. 121–122.
143. Cited in "A German View of the Soviet Air Force," *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April, 1949, p. 77.
144. *Vestnik Protivo-Vozdushnoi Oborony* ("Herald of the Anti-Air Defense Force"), No. 6, June, 1940, pp. 23–26; and interviews with two former Soviet air force officers who served in the PVO.
145. Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 31.
146. As told to L. Zacharoff and cited by him in "The Red Air Fleet Two Years After," *Air Age*, June, 1943, p. 7.
147. Maj. N. Piskarev, "Practice Flights by Instrument [Blind Flying]," *VVF*, No. 1, January, 1947, p. 37.
148. See *Military Review*, Vol. 28, No. 12, 1949, *passim*, for a general survey of Soviet air force training. Also, cf. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–71; and cf. "[Soviet] Military Air Training," *Aviation Age*, Vol. 16, No. 1, July, 1951, pp. 55–57.
149. Former Russian staff officer, "The Soviet Air Force: Postwar Reorganization," *Manchester Guardian*, June 23, 1950. This was confirmed by an admission made by Lt. Gen. Ushakov that in 1946 there were "shortcomings in preparation for altitude flights." (See B. Ushakov, *VVF*, No. 1, 1947, p. 27.)
150. Vershinin, *Pravda*, July 18, 1948.

CHAPTER 21 *Soviet Employment of Sea Power and Amphibious Operations*

1. This same idea, even this sentence, appears in both the military press, as in the editorial "Praise to the Soviet Naval Fleet!" *Krasnaia Zvezda*, July 23, 1950, and in a children's book by Z. N. Perlia, *Boevye Korabli* ("Ships of War"), Moscow-Leningrad, 1948, p. 3; cf. also P. Ancharsky, *SSSR—Velikaia Mor-skaia Derzhava* ("The USSR—A Great Sea Power"), Moscow, 1949, *passim*.
2. Cited by Mairin Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia, 848-1948*, London, 1949, p. 328. This book contains some useful information regarding Western estimates on strength and vessels, but little more; see pp. 369–437 for the relevant chapters.
3. Cf. Capt.-Lieut. [Lt. Comdr., USN] N. A. Shmakov, *Osnovy Voennno-Morskogo Dela* ("Principles of Naval Affairs"), Moscow, 1947, especially p. 252; Admiral V. Alafuzov, "On the Nature of Naval Operations," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, August, 1946, pp. 15–28; and R. N. Mordvinov, *Sovetskoe Voennno-Morskoe Iskusstvo: Sbornik Statei* ("Soviet Naval Art: A Collection of Essays"), Moscow, 1951, 329 pp.
4. Shmakov, *op. cit.*, p. 285.
5. Alafuzov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, p. 15.
6. Stalin, *O Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine Sovetskogo Soiuzu*, p. 356; italics mine.
7. Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 32 and 37. For earlier doctrine, cf. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 185–188, pars. 311–316; and D. D. F. White, "Soviet Naval Doctrine," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, Vol. 80, No. 519, August, 1935, pp. 607–615.
8. Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 32–33.
9. Alafuzov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, p. 17.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 26; Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 38–39.
11. Alafuzov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, pp. 19–20. For a more extended review, see Admiral of the Fleet I. S. Isakov, *The Red Fleet in the Second World War*, London, 1944, 124 pp. Cf. also Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, *passim*; Shmakov, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Tokarev, *Voennno-Morskoi Flot SSSR V Otechestvennoi Voine* ("The Naval Fleet of the USSR in the Fatherland War"), Moscow, 1948, *passim*; *Severnyi Flot v Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine* ("The Northern Fleet in the Great Fatherland War"), Moscow, 1949, *passim*; A. Mitin, *Tikhookeanskii Flot v Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine* ("The Pacific Fleet in the Great Fatherland War"), Moscow, 1948, *passim*; *Moriaki-Geroi Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny Sovetskogo Naroda* ("Naval Heroes in the Great Fatherland War of the Soviet People"), Moscow-Leningrad, 1941, *passim*; and A. Novikov-Priboi, *Boevye Traditsii Russkykh Moriakov* ("Battle Traditions of Russian Seamen"), 1942, *passim*.

12. Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, pp. 37–40.
13. Korkodinov, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 11.
14. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 16; italics in the original.
15. Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 36. The minor exceptions listed are the ultimately successful German landings on Sukho Island in Lake Ladoga and on Oesel Island in the Baltic.
16. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 315, par. 667. Also, see Belli, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 9, 1946, p. 36, for examples.
17. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16; italics in the original.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
19. Secretary of the Navy Kimball recently declared that the Soviet submarine fleet numbers from 300 to 400 vessels (*Evening Star*, Washington, January 21, 1952). The estimate of 300 was given by the Defense Minister of the United Kingdom, E. Shinwell (*New York Times*, July 28, 1951). Other estimates range from 250 to 500. According to the article “Russia and Her Navy,” in *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, July, 1950, p. 103 (from a digest of an article in *The Navy*, Great Britain, December, 1949), maximum German submarine strength was 240 in May, 1943.
20. Capt. of the First Rank Shergin, “Submarine Warfare against Enemy Communications during World War II,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 7, July, 1946, p. 11.
21. Alafuzov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, p. 20.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 28; cf. also Lt. Col. F. Makukhin, “Aircraft versus Ships at Sea,” *Krasnyi Flot*, August 1, 1945.
24. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27.
25. Capt. M. A. Eremtsov, “Air Force Action against Submarines,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 1, January, 1944, pp. 45–54, brings out these tasks well.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
27. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 35, gives one example in the Baltic.
28. *Vremennoe Nastavlenie Po Boevomu Primeneniiu Bombardirovochnoi Aviatsii RKVMF* (“Provisional Manual on the Combat Employment of Bombardment Aviation of the Red Fleet”), Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, p. 1, par. 1.
29. Shmakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 268–269.
30. As reported in *Krasnyi Flot*, February 15, 1947.
31. *Morskoi Sbornik*, editorial, No. 8, August, 1938, p. 19.
32. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 311, par. 663.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 309, par. 660.
34. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 92; see also p. 18 for another statement that navy men were used as “the advanced striking force.” Cf. also Maj. Gen. Desinevich, “Training the Naval Infantry,” *Krasnyi Flot*, September 10, 1946; Shmakov, *op. cit.*, p. 281; and Alafuzov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, 1946, p. 28.

35. Desinevich, *Krasnyi Flot*, September 10, 1946.
36. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 18; see also *ibid.*, p. 35 and pp. 46–47; *Heroic Leningrad*, Moscow, 1945, p. 93; and Kovalevsky, *Boevoi Put' Sovetskoi Armii*, p. 138. (Isakov compares this with land service by Russian seamen in 1854 and at other times.)
37. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
38. According to a former Soviet official and a former Soviet fighter pilot, both then in Moscow, interviewed by this writer.
39. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 91; cf. also Haider, “Diary: Campaign in Russia,” Vols. 6 and 7, entries for December 29 and 31, 1941, January 5, 1942, and May 17, 18, and 19, 1942.
41. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18 and 91–93.
42. These landings are discussed in great detail in an article by Capt. of the First Rank Yu. P. Kovel' and Lt. Col. (Navy) P. K. Utkin, “Operations of the Black Sea Fleet during the Summer—Fall Campaigns of 1944,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, June, 1946, pp. 35–47; cf. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 91–92.
43. Isakov, *op. cit.*, p. 91, mentions this operation.
44. Lt. Col. A. Bondarenko, “Tactical Training of Naval Infantry,” *Krasnyi Flot*, July 12, 1946.
45. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 93, 17, and 18; italics in the original.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18 and p. 90.
47. “Aviation during the Landing Operation in Forcing the Kerch Strait” (no author given), *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 13, July, 1944, *passim*.
48. A. A. Sagoian, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, January 20, 1947.
49. *Ibid.*
50. Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 92–93; cf. also Kovel' and Utkin, *Morskoi Shornik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 39.
51. Cf. Kovel' and Utkin, *Morskoi Sbornik*, No. 6, 1946, *passim*, and Isakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 92 and 93. (Citations to commanders were all given to majors and lieutenant colonels, indicating the size of the assault units used.)
52. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
53. Bondarenko, *Krasnyi Flot*, July 12, 1946; cf. also Desinevich, *Krasnyi Flot*. September 10, 1946.
54. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 310, par. 662; p. 312, par. 663; and p. 314, par. 666.

CHAPTER 22 *Special Combat Conditions*

1. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 99, par. 217.
2. For one example, in a popular exhortatory vein, see “Glory to Our Victorious Red Army!” (editorial), *Bol’shevik*, No. 5, March, 1944, p. 10.
3. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 102, par. 225; p. 103, par. 226; italics in the original. For earlier statements, see the *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 177–180, pars. 293–298; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 291–297.
4. German accounts attest Soviet ability in forest combat. For a Soviet account of model action, see Maj. Karasev, “Direction of Combat in Forests,” *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 14, 1942.
5. Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
6. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, projected, Moscow, 1940, p. 15, par. 34.
7. *Rukovodstvo Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, Part II, Moscow, 1943, p. 14, par. 31.
8. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, June, 1946, p. 23.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 17–28; Gastilovich does not explicitly draw these conclusions. Cf. also “The Soviet Army and Mountain Warfare,” *La Suisse*, January 15, 1949, based on an article from *Krasnaia Zvezda* by Gastilovich.
10. See *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 179, par. 374, and p. 101, par. 222; *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 171–177, pars. 281–292; *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 284–290; *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, 1940, p. 8, par. 17, and p. 82, par. 288; and Col. A. Serebriakov, “Bases of Offensive Combat of the Rifle Regiment and Battalion in the Mountains,” *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 12, June, 1947, p. 3.
11. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, 1940, p. 82, par. 285.
12. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 20 and 21.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 20 and 24; and cf. the *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, 1940, p. 17, par. 42.
15. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 26 and 27; and cf. the *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, 1940, pp. 23–27, pars. 67–87.
16. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, 1946, p. 26.
17. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Gorakh*, 1940, p. 30, par. 102.
18. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, 1946, p. 27; cf. also the *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 102, par. 224; and the discussion of the airborne troops in Chap. 20 of this study.
19. Gastilovich, *Voennaia Mysl’*, No. 6, 1946, pp. 23 and 21.
20. *Nastupatel’nyi Boi*, 1942, p. 5; italics mine.

21. Anonymous high-ranking German military source.
22. Cf. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 180–182, pars. 299–305; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 298–300.
23. Cf. Brigade Comdr. P. Yarchevsky, “The Character of Operations in Desert-Steppe Regions,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 5, May, 1940, pp. 80–94. (Materials were not complete enough to permit determination as to what Soviet evaluations of the early African campaigns of the Second World War were made.)
24. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 2, 1942 through 1945, pp. 176–177, pars. 514–515; cf. also *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 105, par. 232, and pp. 182–185, pars. 305–310; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 301–309.
25. Lt. Gen. (now Gen.) V. I. Chuikov, “Street Fighting—The Lessons of Stalin-grad,” in *Stalingrad*, London, 1943, pp. 102–109; cf. also “Russian Combat in Cities,” *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 6, September, 1949, pp. 85–91 (also based on an article by Chuikov).
26. Chuikov, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
27. Lt. Col. Kizium, “The Character of Tank Actions in Battle for a Populated Place,” *Zhurnal Avto-Bronetankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk*, No. 6, June, 1945, pp. 11–15.
28. See the English translation of Konstantin Simonov’s book, *Days and Nights*, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1945, 421 pp. It is, of course, idealized in the Soviet image, but not fully at the expense of realism. Cf. also Maj. Gen. Antropov, in *Orel*, p. 79; and Budrin, “Night Combat in a Populated Place,” *Krasnaia Zvezda*, March 3, 1942.
29. Prewar writings on forcing rivers are surveyed in a comprehensive bibliography in “Forcing Rivers,” *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, August, 1940, pp. 122–127. For prewar Soviet recognition of the role of rivers in strengthening defense, see D. Uait (White), “The Activity of Military Flotillas on Internal Waterways,” *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, pp. 293–318; Vol. 2, pp. 335–363; and the 1940 *Polevoi Ustav*, p. 245, par. 496.
30. Maj. Gen. F. Isaev, *Bitva za Dnepr* (“The Battle for the Dnepr”), Moscow, 1944, p. 4.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 100, par. 220; *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, pp. 165–170, pars. 272–280; and *Obshchaia Taktika*, Vol. 1, 1940, pp. 272–283.
33. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Zimnikh Usloviakh* (“Manual for the Operations of Troops in Winter Conditions”), projected, Moscow, 1939, p. 5, par. 2.
34. A. Svechin, “Dangerous Illusions,” *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1924, pp. 44–55.
35. Cf. S. Kozhukov, “On the Question of the Evaluation of the Role of M. E. Kutuzov in the Fatherland War of 1812,” *Bol'shevik*. No. 15, August, 1951, p. 21, and E. Tarim’s “Letter to the Editors of *Bol'shevik*” *Bol'shevik*. No. 19, October, 1951, pp. 71–77.
36. *Nastavlenie Dlia Deistvii Voisk V Zimnikh Usloviakh*, 1939, p. 5, par. 1.
37. Col. Gen. I. Sokolov, “Aviation in Battles for the Soviet Arctic,” *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 3, February, 1945, p. 11.
38. Cf. Borovkov, *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 22, November, 1944, pp. 25–29, for one Soviet discussion.

39. Ishchenko, *op. cit.*, p. 55; italicized in the original.
40. Cf. Kournakoff, *op. cit.*, p. 144, for an account of winter combat conditions.
41. *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 159, par. 261; italics in the original.
42. Col. Gen. V. Kuznetsov, "Night Operations," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, May, 1946, p. 14.
43. *Boevoi Ustav Pekhoty*, Vol. 1, 1942–1945, p. 260, par. 812; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 322, par. 679; *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 160, par. 263; Kolchigin, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 7, 1940, p. 95; and Maj. I. I. Rosliakov, "Characteristics and Significance of Night Operations," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, July, 1940, p. 88.
44. Rosliakov, *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 6, 1940, p. 93; *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 99, par. 218; p. 152, par. 314; p. 151, par. 312; Lt. Gen. F. Glazunov, "Night Troop Operations," *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 17–18, September, 1946, p. 11.
45. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 7, entry for December 19, 1941.
46. Glazunov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 17–18, 1946, p. 6.
47. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1940, p. 153, par. 315; *Vremennyi Polevoi Ustav*, 1936, p. 161, par. 266; italics in the original.
48. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, par. 343, cited in Kuznetsov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, 1946, p. 14.
49. Kuznetsov, *Voennyi Vestnik*, No. 9, 1946, p. 14, lists all but the last two examples cited; they are given in "Opinions Sovietiques: L'Attaque de Nuit," ("Soviet Views: Night Attack"), *Revue Militaire d'Information*, No. 153, May 10, 1950, pp. 24–27, based on an account by "Soviet Commander Nesterov."
50. It is reported that 163 searchlights were so used at Berlin; *Military Review*, Vol. 31, No. 7, October, 1951, p. 81.

CHAPTER 23 *Soviet Employment of Partisan Forces*

1. Cf. Lt. Col. F. O. Miksche (UK), *Secret Forces: The Technique of Underground Movements*, London, 1948, for a good review of Marxian origins of partisan warfare, although he exaggerates their importance in the development of guerrilla warfare as a whole.
2. Frunze, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 1, 1921, p. 43.
3. *Ibid.*
4. -----, *Isbrannye Proizvedeniia*, p. 52.
5. Tukhachevsky, *Voina Klassov*, p. 139.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Muralov, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 5, 1922, p. 25.
9. *Polevoi Ustav*, 1944, p. 372, par. 851. The chapter comprises pp. 372–384, pars. 851–880, and is fairly general in its treatment of the subject.
10. Cf. L. Bychkov, *Partizanskoe Dvizhenie v Otechestvennoi Voini 1812 Goda* ("The Partisan Movement in the Fatherland War of 1812"), Moscow, 1941, 24 pp.; L. Bychkov, "The Partisans of 1812," *Sputnik Agitatora* ("The Agitator's Handbook"), No. 12, 1941, pp. 24-25; L. Bychkov, "The Peasant Partisan Movement against the Napoleonic Invasion of Russia in 1812," *Istoricheskii Zhurnal*, No. 10, 1938, pp. 61–76; D. Cherviakov, *Partizanskoe Dvizhenie V Otechestvennoi Voine 1812 Goda* ("The Partisan Movement in the Fatherland War of 1812"), Moscow-Leningrad, 1941, 24 pp.; and Evgeny Tarle, *Nashestvie Napoleona na Rossiia, 1812 Goda* ("Napoleon's Invasion of Russia, 1812"), Moscow, 1943; and cf. Evgeny Tar 16, *Partizanskaia Bor'ba v Natsional'no-Osvobodivshiesia Voinakh Zapada* ("The Partisan Struggle in the National-Liberation Wars of the West"), Moscow, 1943, 115 pp., for a Soviet historian's recognition of the non-Marxian guerrilla struggle (but which is explained in a Marxian framework).
11. A. Gritsuk, in *Behind the Front Line* (a translation of Lt. Gen. Ponomarenko *et al.*, *V Tylu Vraga*), London, 1945, p. 16.
12. A. Borisov, "The Influence of Partisans on the Outcome of the Operation against Kolchak in 1919," *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 3, 1924, p. 99. Cf. also N. Petrovich, *Oborona Tyla Armii* ("Defense of the Army Rear"), Moscow, 1936, p. 25ff. and B. Volin, *Kak Rabochie i Krest'iani Ustanovili Sovetskuiu Vlast' i Otstoieli Ee V Grazhdanskoi Voine* ("How the Workers and Peasants Established and Defended the Soviet Power in the Civil War"), Moscow, 1946, 40 pp.
13. Stalin, *O Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine*, p. 27.
14. A. F. Fyodorov, *The Underground R. C. Carries On*, Moscow, 1949, p. 20.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.
18. Interviews with about one dozen former Soviet partisans conducted by Dr. Herbert Dinerstein of The Rand Corporation.
19. P. K. Ignatov, *Partisans of the Kuban*, London, 1944, pp. 12 and 21. (This is a translation of the first of two volumes written by Ignatov under the title *Zapiski Partizana* in 1944 and 1947; see the Bibliography.)
20. In addition to Kovpak's memoirs, one of his lieutenants has also written an account; cf. P. Vershigora, *Liudi S Chistoi Sovest'iu* ("People with a Pure Conscience"), Moscow, 1948, 402 pp. Also cf. Vasily Andreev, "The People's War: From the Diary of a Bryansk Partisan," *Novy Mir* ("New World"), Moscow, No. 6, June, 1948, pp. 90-207.
21. Maj. Gen. S. A. Kovpak, *Our Partisan Course*, London, n.d., p. 8.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 55; O. Karpova, in *Behind the Front Line*, p. 79; and A.S. (pseud.), *ibid.*, p. 101.
23. Lt. Gen. Ponomarenko, in *Behind the Front Line*, p. 7.
24. T. Strokach, *ibid.*, pp. 45-46.
25. E. Gabrilovich, *ibid.*, p. 53.
26. B. Yampolsky, *ibid.*, p. 42.
27. See M. Nikitin, *ibid.*, p. 131, for examples.
28. Kovpak, *op. cit.*, p. 42; cf. also Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
29. Cf. M. Kaganovich, *Der Yidisher anteil in der partizanen-bewegung fun Sovet- Rutland* ("The Participation of the Jews in the Partisan Movement in Soviet Russia"), Rome, 1948, pp. 64-66 (from notes by Dr. H. Dinerstein).
30. *We Are Guerrillas*, London, n.d., p. 9.
31. Kovpak, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-82.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 77 and 106ff.
34. According to Dinerstein interviews with former partisans.
35. *Banden-bekämpfung* ("Fighting Guerrilla Bands"), Field Order, German Army High Command, Field Headquarters, May 6, 1944, p. 4.
36. Peresypkin, *Voiska Sviazi Sovetskoi Armii*, p. 87.
37. Yatsuk, *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 2, 1922, p. 81.
38. Vershinin, "Soviet Aviation in the Battles for the Freedom and Independence of the Motherland," *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota*, No. 2, February, 1948, p. 27.
39. For some specific accounts, cf. Kovpak, *op. cit.*, pp. 76, 82, 92, and 96; V. Nekrasov, in *Behind the Front Line*, pp. 137-138, 140-141; and S. Sviridov, *ibid.*, p. 36.
40. *Banden-bekämpfung*, p. 10.
41. *The Heroic Defense of Sevastopol*, p. 68.

42. Quoted in *We Are Guerrillas*, p. 32.
43. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 7, November 28, 1941.
44. Cf. "Soviet Partisan Warfare," in *Army Information Digest*, Vol. 6, No. 2, February, 1951, p. 62. This article summarizes briefly the general pattern of partisan activities during the Soviet-German war.
45. For one example, see Nekrasov, in *Behind the Front Line*, p. 140.
46. Ponomarenko, in *Behind the Front Line*, p. 12.
47. Kovpak, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
49. *Sputnik Partizana* ("The Partisan's Handbook"), Moscow, 1942, pp. 11–15.
50. *Banden-bekämpfung*, p. 8.
51. Cf. *We Are Guerrillas*, pp. 24–25.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
54. *Soviet Calendar*, Moscow, 1947, p. 178.
55. Ponomarenko in *Behind the Front Line*, p. 10.
56. *Ibid.*

APPENDIX II *The Trial by Arms'. June to December, 1941*

1. Lenin, in *Zvezda* ("The Star"), April 1, 1912; and in *Novy Luch* ("New Light"), February 24, 1907.
2. Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, Garden City, New York, 1937, p. 225. Cf. Egorev, *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia*, Vol. 4, 1922, p. 96, for another early Soviet statement; and cf. Field Marshal Ritter von Leeb, *Defense*, Harrisburg, 1943, p. 101, for a German statement.
3. R. J. Sontag and J. S. Beddie (eds.), *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939–1941*, documents from the German archives, Department of State, Washington, D.C., 1948, pp. 260–261. This passage is also found in Lt. Col. Yu. Korol'kov, "How 'Plan Barbarossa' Was Prepared," *Voennaia Mysl'*, No. 8, August, 1946, p. 43. This article is a Soviet presentation of the German strategy and is intended for higher Soviet officers. It is also quoted by Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 4–5.
4. Vice-Admiral Kurt Assmann, "Stalin and Hitler: The Road to Stalingrad," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 75, No. 7, July, 1949, p. 764.
5. Cited in *Military Review*, Vol. 27, No. 11, February, 1948, p. 95.
6. Haider, "Diary: Campaign in Russia," Vol. 6, July 3, 1941; hereinafter cited as "Diary."

- [7.](#) Quoted by Hart in *The German Generals Talk*, p. 174.
- [8.](#) Haider, "Diary," Vol. 7, August 10, 1941.
- [9.](#) Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, pp. 174–175; Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p. 353.
- [10.](#) Haider, "Diary," Vol. 6, entries for April 4 and June 21, 1941; and Gen. Kurt von Tippelskirch, *Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkriegs* ("History of the Second World War"), Bonn, 1951, p. 203.
- [11.](#) Haider, "Diary," June 21, 1941. Other sources vary slightly, especially in the number of active satellite forces committed, but these are the most reliable and authoritative.
- [12.](#) Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, p. 333. For published Soviet sources giving 170 divisions, cf. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War*, p. 10; Zamiatin *et al.*, *Desiat' Sokrushitel'nykh Udarov*, p. 3; and Isayev, *New Times*. No. 52, 1949, p. 22. Firsov, *op. cit.*, states 170 German and 40 satellite divisions. *Voprosy Istorii*, editorial, No. 5, 1950, p. 18, and Goudima, *op. cit.*, p. 184, give the higher figure.
- [13.](#) Stalin himself told Hopkins that their initial force was 180 divisions and 60 tank divisions (brigades), increasing to 260 by the end of July (Sherwood, *op. cit.*, p. 333); Churchill gives 188 divisions, including 119 on the frontier (*The Grand Alliance*, p. 378). Cyril Falls, *The Second World War*, 3d ed., London, 1950, p. 108, gives as the total figure 180 divisions plus 55 tank brigades, 158 divisions being on the frontier; and Goudima, *op. cit.*, estimates the total as being 180 divisions.
- [14.](#) Haider, "Diary," Vol. 6, June 22 and 23, 1941.
- [15.](#) *Ibid.*, July 8.
- [16.](#) *Ibid.*, July 23.
- [17.](#) Ely, *op. cit.*, p. 132; Guillaume, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27; Goudima, *op. cit.*, p. 196; Vice-Admiral Kurt Assmann, "The Battle for Moscow: Turning Point of the War," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2, January, 1950, pp. 315–320; Wallace Carroll, in *Life*, December 19, 1949, p. 31; A. M. Nikolaieff, "The Red Army in the Second World War," *Russian Review*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Autumn, 1947, pp. 49–60; and Boris Shub, *The Choice*, New York, 1950, p. 50, give these figures with slight variations, but the figures given are approximately correct.
- [18.](#) Cited in Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, p. 170; cf. also B. H. Liddell Hart, "Was Russia Close to Defeat?" *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, July, 1950, p. 12.
- [19.](#) Quoted by Hart in *The German Generals Talk*, p. 174.
- [20.](#) Estimates on the size of the Soviet air force in June, 1941, vary widely, but the German combat reports indicate that the figures given are approximately accurate. In the article "Russian Air Strategy," *Military Review*, Vol. 30, No. 8, November, 1950, p. 94, Soviet air losses in the summer of 1941 are estimated at 8000 aircraft; this is consistent with combat reports mentioned by Haider (cf. especially "Diary," Vol. 6, July 1, 1941). In *Pravda*, October 5, 1941, A. S. Shcherbakov, an alternate member of the Politburo, even admitted Soviet losses of 5316 aircraft.
- [21.](#) Haider, "Diary," Vol. 6, February 22 and 27, 1941.
- [22.](#) *Ibid.*, July 1, 1941.
- [23.](#) Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 175.

- [24.](#) Cited in William L. White, *Land of Milk and Honey*, New York, 1949, p. 154.
- [25.](#) Pirogov, in an interview with this author.
- [26.](#) Lt. Col. N. Denisov (Red Army), “The Soviet Air Force after a Year of War,” *Aviation*, August, 1942, p. 90.
- [27.](#) Tippleskirch, *op. cit.*, p. 203, states that 1300 combat aircraft were committed in June, 1941; Churchill, in *The Grand Alliance*, p. 354, gives the figure as 2700; and Lee, in *The German Air Force*, New York, 1946, p. 110, and Lt. Col. J. Accart (France) in *Forces Aeriennes Fran(aises)* (“French Air Forces”), No. 19, April, 1948, both estimate that 3000 aircraft were committed.
- [28.](#) Stalin himself told Hopkins that the Soviet strength was 24,000 tanks in 60 divisions (brigades) of 350 to 400 each, and an allotment of 50 tanks to each infantry division (Sherwood, *op. cit.*, p. 335). United States estimates give the losses indicated (*Army Information Digest*, Vol. 5, No. 11, November, 1950, p. 61, and G. Underhill, “The Story of Soviet Armor,” *Armored Cavalry Journal*, No. 3, May—June, 1950, p. 21). Hart, *Defense of the West*, p. 21, gives the figures in the German specific reference and the total; Assmann also gives the over-all Axis total at 3000 tanks (*Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2, January, 1950, p. 310). Haider, “Diary,” Vol. 6, July 2, 1941, estimated Soviet strength at that date as being 15,000 tanks. Guderian reports that Hitler told him in August, 1941, that if he had believed Guderian’s statement in 1937 that the Soviets had 10,000 tanks, he would never have attacked. (Gen. Heinz Guderian, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten* [“Memoirs of a Soldier”], Heidelberg, 1951, p. 172.)
- [29.](#) Haider, “Diary,” Vol. 7, September 12, 1941. Cf. also Lt. Gen. H. J. Rieckhoff in *Military Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April, 1949, p. 74.
- [30.](#) Haider, “Diary,” Vol. 7, entry for October 10–November 3, 1941 (made in one entry because Haider was in the hospital during this time).
- [31.](#) *Ibid.*, entry for August 4, 1941 (data as of July 31).
- [32.](#) *Ibid.*, January 5, 1942 (data as of December 31).
- [33.](#) *Ibid.*, entries for June 25 and July 2, 1942.
- [34.](#) In an appended postwar commentary to Haider’s unpublished “Diary.”
- [35.](#) One ring was headed by a veteran Soviet spy, Richard Sorge, in Tokyo. (For the official United States account of this, see *The Congressional Record*, Vol. 95, Part 12, February 10, 1949, p. A-719.) The other source was through a network in Switzerland which obtained information from a high-ranking German staff source (cf. Foote, *op. cit.*, pp. 113–115 and 205).
- [36.](#) Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p. 493.
- [37.](#) Charles W. Thayer, *Hands across the Caviar*, L. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and New York, 1952, pp. 67–68. See also *ibid.*, pp. 69 and 190–191, on the early war experience of the Soviet colonel and of a German lieutenant.
- [38.](#) Tippleskirch, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
- [39.](#) A number of interviews conducted by the author. The only exceptions are Lt. Colonel Tokaev (Tokaev, *op. cit.*, p. 34), who states that on April 16, 1941, General Klovov, of the Political Administration, announced to a small select group that war was expected “at any moment”; that “it is essential that we should not be caught unawares”; and that to meet this the Soviets

would themselves attack first in August; and Nora Korozhenko Murray, then a minor NKVD agent in Moscow, who said that she was told by an NKVD captain in late May, 1941, that “Russia will be at war in a month’s time” (Nora Murray, *I Spied for Stalin*, London, 1950, pp. 202–204 and p. 215).

- [40.](#) Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, p. 175; V. Zambrzhitsky, “Notes on the History of the Second World War: Soviet Strategic Plans,” *Chasovoi* (“The Sentinel”), Brussels, No. 314, December, 1951, pp. 4–5, cites several former Soviet officers; and R. T. Paget, *Manstein: His Campaigns and His Trial*, London, 1951, p. 30.
- [41.](#) Markoff, *Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 222, No. 46, 1950, pp. 175–176; several interviews with former Soviet officers; and a former high-ranking German military source.
- [42.](#) *Ibid.*, p. 175.
- [43.](#) Tippleskirch, *op. cit.*, pp. 214–216.
- [44.](#) Denisov, *Aviation*, August, 1942, p. 92.

Bibliography

This bibliography has been selected from the sources used in the preparation of this study, eliminating highly technical works of relatively little interest or value for our subject. Many sources were taken from the Soviet military periodical press, but to list the relevant articles drawn from military periodical sources of thirty-five years, the last ten of them intensively covered, would do the reader little service. Accordingly, only a few of the most generally useful recent articles have been listed, and the various organs of the military press have been described in a bibliographical note on Soviet periodical military publications.

Although a subject categorization of sources has its advantages, it also requires a great deal of duplication; and since the footnotes to the text carry much of this burden, the bibliography is arranged according to the nature of the source: Soviet—official regulations, manuals, and field orders, and other military writings; and non-Soviet—former Soviet officers, German sources (given separately because of the particular German military contact), other Western observers and analysts of Soviet military affairs, and certain related non-Soviet sources referred to in this study. The vast amount written of late in the Western periodical press has been sifted for the most useful recent articles of special relevance to a study on doctrine, omitting the numerous discussions of current capabilities and speculations on intentions.

The bibliography is divided into the following sections:

Note on Soviet periodical military publications;

- A. Official Soviet regulations and manuals;
- B. Soviet sources: books and pamphlets;
- C. Soviet sources: selected recent periodical references;
- D. Soviet sources: Radio Moscow and TASS;
- E. Former Soviet sources;
- F. German sources;
- G. Non-Soviet commentaries on Soviet military affairs;

NOTE ON SOVIET PERIODICAL MILITARY PUBLICATIONS

The military nonperiodical press is centralized in the Military Publishing House [*Voennoe Izdatel'stvo*, or, usually, *Voenizdat*,] and although all its publications are not official, they at least pass through official channels. Those which are official are thus designated: before 1946, the Peoples' Commissariat of Defense (NKO); from 1946 to 1950, the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MVS); and since February, 1950, the Ministry of War (VM) and the Ministry of the Navy (MVMF). The *Voenizdat* is apparently under the Affairs Administration of the Ministry of War (now Defense).

There are no "unofficial" service journals or newspapers. Aside from local newspapers, there are two official newspapers, *Krasnaia Zvezda* and *Krasnyi Flot*. *Krasnaia Zvezda* ("Red Star"), published by the Chief Political Administration of the Soviet Army (since 1924), appears daily. It discusses military and political subjects, with a very significant continuing decline in the former since the end of the war. It has special correspondents, especially in wartime, and also takes articles by officers. *Krasnyi Flot* ("Red Fleet") is the equivalent for the Navy and is published by its Chief Administration (since 1938). On neither letterhead is the political administration listed, and each states merely that it is the "organ of the Ministry of War (the Navy)."

The most important military periodical is *Voennaia Mysl'* ("Military Thought"), published monthly since 1937 by the Historical Division of the General Staff of the Soviet Army.* It usually carries articles by leading military authorities on strategic and tactical problems of importance, although it, too, is less useful in time of peace. The chief editor is Major General Nikolai Talensky. It is marked: "For Generals, Admirals, and Officers of the Soviet Army and Navy only" and is further limited in its actual circulation.

* Of the numerous early military journals which did not survive the 1930's, we need mention only a few which were especially important, and which were used in this study. *Voennaia Nauka i Revoliutsiia* ("Military Science and the Revolution") was the organ of the Revolutionary Military Council (High Command). In 1922 its name was changed to *Voennaia Mysl' i Revoliutsiia* ("Military Thought and Revolution"), and, later, to *Voina i Revoliutsiia* ("War and the Revolution"), which was replaced in 1937 by *Voennaia Mysl'* ("Military Thought").

Voennyi Vestnik (“Military Herald”) is published monthly by the Chief Administration for the Ground Forces and has been since 1921. Since 1948 it has declined very considerably in terms of tactical information and now presents primarily political indoctrination and general training guides.

Vestnik V ozdushnogo Flota (“Herald of the Air Fleet”) is published by the Chief Administration of the Army Air Force (WS). Published since 1917; twice monthly until 1945, since then, published monthly.

Artilleriiskii Zhurnal (“The Artillery Journal”) has been published monthly, since 1931, by the Chief Administration of Artillery.

Tankist (“The Tankist”), recently renamed from *Zhurnal Avto-Brone-tankovykh i Mekhanizirovannykh Voisk* (“The Journal of the Tank and Mechanized Troops”), is published monthly by that Chief Administration.

Sovetskii Sviazist (“Soviet Communications Man”), formerly *Sviaz* (“Communication”) is the organ of the Chief Administration for the Communication Troops.

Voенно-Inzhenernyi Zhurnal (“The Military Engineering Journal”) is published by the Chief Administration for Military Engineers.

Tyl i Snabzhenie Vooruzhënnnykh Sil (“The Rear and the Supply of the Armed Forces”) is published by the Chief Administration of the Rear.

Vestnik Protivo-Vozdushnoi Oborony (“The Herald of the Air Defense Force”) has been issued monthly since 1929 by the Main Administration of the Anti-Air Defense Force (PVO).

Morskoi Sbornik (“The Naval Journal”), the official naval organ, is a useful tactical-instructional magazine for naval officers, published monthly since the early 1930’s.

The DOSAAF (“Voluntary Society for Aid to the Army, Aviation, and the Fleet”) publishes several paramilitary periodicals. The most important is *Voennoe Znamia* (“Military Banner”), formerly the organ of DOSARM, published since 1948. Its predecessor was the journal *Za Oboronu* (“For Defense”), published since 1924 by Osoaviakhim and the MPVO of the NKVD (MVD). Since October, 1950, an aviation journal called *Kril’ia Rodiny* (“Wings of the Motherland”), has been published—first by DOSAV, and then, since the amalgamation of the preservice organizations, by DOSAAF.

The Ministry of the Aviation Industry (MAP) published a highly technical monthly periodical from 1926 to 1946 (now believed discontinued), called *Tekhnika Vozdushnogo Flota* (“Technology of the Air Fleet”).

The Ministry of the Maritime Fleet (MMF) has, since 1940, published a technical journal called *Morskoi Flot* (“The Maritime Fleet”) for the guidance of its officers.

Voennye Znaniia (“Military Knowledge”) is a recent popular journal on military affairs.

A. OFFICIAL SOVIET REGULATIONS AND MANUALS

voei Ustav Istrebitel'noi Aviatsii Krasnoi Armii (BUIA-40) (“Combat Regulations for Fighter Aviation of the Red Army [BUIA-40]”), Voenmorizdat, NKO, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, 55 pp

voei Ustav Konnitsy RKKA (BUK-38) (“Combat Regulations of the Cavalry of the Red Army [BUK-38]”), Part I (Vol. 1), Voenizdat, NKO, Moscow, 1941, 174 pp.

d., Part II (Vol. 2) (Squadron and Regiment), provisional, Voenizdat, NKO, Moscow, 1942, 170 pp.

voei Ustav Pekhoty Krasnoi Armii (“Infantry Combat Regulations of the Red Army”), Part I (Vol. 1) (Soldier, Squad, Platoon, Company), Voenizdat, NKO, Moscow, 1942, 267 pp. (Security classified in USSR). Reissued in 1943, 1944, and 1945, and not known to have been superseded.

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A number of interviews of former Soviet officers by this author have been used as background sources in preparing this study. In almost all cases anonymity is required or preferred, and the few specific interviews listed below are the only ones of which the sources can be named, directly identified, and cited.

MARKOFF, ALEXEI (pseud.), formerly a major general in the Soviet army air force. General Markoff served in the Red Army from 1917 until his capture in combat during the Second World War. His prewar work in Soviet military planning and his wartime command experience have made him a most valuable source. His reliability has proved to be very high.

ARMINE, ALEXANDER, former Soviet general. He fought in the Civil War, graduated from the General Staff Academy (later named for Frunze) in 1923, and returned for a refresher course at the Frunze Academy in 1934. He defected from a diplomatic post in 1937.

RIAKOV, MIKHAIL; formerly a Soviet writer and a captain serving on Timoshenko's staff. He was then with the air force, and later with the infantry until his capture shortly before the close of the war. As a professional journalist, he was observant of some matters of interest not often noted.

LOGOV, PETER, former Soviet air force lieutenant. He was a navigator of a Soviet reconnaissance plane during and after the war. He defected to the West in 1948.

The author has personally interviewed the following former Soviet officers, who can be identified only by rank: Major General (infantry), Colonel (infantry), Colonel (army air force), Lt. Colonel (long-range air force), Lt. Colonel (rear services), Major (infantry), Captain (army air force), Captain (infantry), Captain (artillery), Senior Lieutenant (army air force), Senior Lieutenant (NKVD and NKGB), and Senior Lieutenant (tank troops).

In addition, I have benefited from accounts of interviews held by colleagues. In particular, I am indebted to Dr. Herbert Dinerstein, who is currently preparing a study on Soviet partisans, for making available data collected by him in extended interviews with about a dozen former Soviet partisan

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